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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-116 *14 June 1996*

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab: Arab League Chief Denies 'Confrontation' Between Jordan, Syria

NC1306121596 Cairo MENA in English 1120 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, June 13 (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has said that his meeting today with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and head of the Presidential Court Dr. Zakariya 'Azmi aimed at coordinating stances before the coming Cairo summit slated for June 21 through 23.

In statements today after the aforementioned meeting Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said Cairo plenary summit is important for boosting the peace process after the Likud assumed power in Israel.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid hoped that the summit would succeed as it is an important step for rallying Arab ranks.

The Arab foreign ministers meeting which will precede the summit is also important for coordination and defining the targets before the convening of the summit, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said the summit aims at reaching a unified Arab stance vis-a-vis an issue of destiny, namely reaching a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

In answer to a query on exchanged accusations between Syria and Jordan regarding some topics, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said there is no confrontation but the summit aims at seeking the continuation of the peace process.

In answer to another query, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid referred to a staunch desire on the part of the Arab countries to realise solidarity and render the summit successful.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Sees 'Netanyahu Negotiating With Netanyahu'

TA1306131296 Ramallah AL-AYYAM in Arabic 12 Jun 96 pp 1, 18

[Report by 'Abd-al-Ra'uf Arna'ut]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala', speaker of the Legislative Council, has affirmed the Palestinian National Authority's [PNA] commitment to the agreements that it signed with Israel. In a statement to AL-AYYAM, he said, however: If Israeli Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu keeps insisting on his noes, we too have many noes, yet we remain committed to the agreements.

Quray' described what has been leaked so far in the Israeli media about Netanyahu's policy guidelines as "Netanyahu negotiating with Netanyahu," adding: We are committed to the agreements, but if Israel abrogates them then we will decide accordingly.

Quray' stressed that the PNA will persist in its demands about the Palestinian right of return, the right to self-determination, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. He said: This is the title and umbrella according to which the final solution talks will proceed.

Quray' considered the Arab states' decision to convene an expanded summit on 21-23 June as a very positive step. He said: We are in dire need of consolidating Arab solidarity and reformulating the joint Arab program. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat Says Netanyahu Will Face 'Facts on the Ground'

TA1306163996 Ramallah AL-BILAD in Arabic 12 Jun 96 pp 1, 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Ramallah, AL-BILAD — Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, member of the Palestinian Legislative Council and member of the Palestinian delegation to the talks with the Israeli side, has said that Netanyahu has two options: Either he continues in the peace process on the basis of the reference point determined at the Madrid conference, or he keeps talking about peace while implementing his electoral program on the ground. In other words, continuing and reinforcing settlement activity in the Palestinian territories, continuing the illegal annexation of Jerusalem, and disregarding Israel's commitments.

Commenting on the upcoming Israeli Government's policy guidelines, which were announced two days ago, 'Urayqat said that the second option means that Netanyahu and Israel alone will be responsible before the world for the collapse of the peace process. He stressed that the consequences of such a development will not be limited to the relations with the Palestinians alone, but will involve the entire Middle East.

'Urayqat said that the PLO does not fear, because it knows that it signed the agreements with Israel's government, not with Israeli parties. The PLO is also aware that what the democratic choice of any people produces does not give it the right to dissociate itself from commitments signed by a previous government.

'Urayqat said that peace is a mutual need. If Israel wants peace it knows what the requirements are. Foremost of all, those requirements are epitomized in the recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and withdrawal from the territories that Israel occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem. He added that peace and

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settlement activity are parallel lines which do not meet. There is only one equation for achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region. This is based on returning the territories occupied in 1967 in exchange for peace.

'Urayqat expressed the belief that Netanyahu cannot take the risk of being responsible before the world for the collapse of the entire peace process. He said: "The important thing is what we will actually see on the ground." He stressed that the issue does not require a big test; the requirements of peace are clear. He added: "There is an international partnership in the peace process. Can Israel bear the consequences for the collapse of the peace process?"

'Urayqat said: "Netanyahu will be facing facts on the ground — the PLO, the Palestinian legislative elections, the Palestinian presidential elections, and the national security forces. He will find that 30 percent of the Palestinian territories are under the sovereignty of the Palestinian National Authority." That will make Netanyahu's position difficult and a halt of the peace process a calamity.

Palestinian Affairs: Sha'th Urges Netanyahu To Implement Hebron Redeployment

TA1306141396 Gaza AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH in Arabic 12 Jun 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, has said that Netanyahu's government must implement the agreement on redeployment in Hebron. He noted that the Palestinian side will not allow the agreement to be reexamined. Sha'th stressed that implementing the agreement is an important step, especially since withdrawal from Hebron will be a real test of the new Israeli Government. He added that the Palestinian Authority [PA] will await the formation of the Israeli Government in order to see the outlines of its new policy.

On reports in the Israeli media that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] intends to carry out a military operation against Israel, Sha'th said: The PA has no knowledge of this whatsoever.

Commenting on new Israeli statements on the intention of the Israeli army to operate in the Palestinian territories, Sha'th said that this is another step against the agreement. He called on Israel to implement all the articles of the agreement so that the peace process will continue.

With regard to returning to the Camp David formula, Sha'th said that the Camp David Accord does not interest the Palestinians because we reached an agreement with Israel in Oslo, and this was witnessed by U.S. President Bill Clinton and other world leaders. He added that the PA will not allow the Oslo agreement, which has already been signed, to be renegotiated. He said that there is no need to go back to the Madrid Peace Conference formula.

Sha'th noted that the upcoming Arab summit is an important step because it will be the first such summit in six years. He expressed the hope that the Arabs will adopt a unified stance toward the peace process.

Palestinian Affairs: Quray'—Israeli Government Stands Pose 'Challenge' to Peace

JN1406063096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 14 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray' yesterday issued a press release in which he praised the Egyptian efforts to revitalize Arab solidarity. Quray' said the forthcoming Cairo summit must take a position to defend Arab rights.

Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'] said the public stands of the new Israeli Government pose a challenge to the peace process. He warned that the right-wing coalition in Israel aims to confiscate land and Judaize occupied Jerusalem.

The Legislative Council speaker also said the continuation of the peace process hinges on the extent of the Israeli Government's adherence to the peace agreements and international resolutions.

Palestinian Affairs: PA Renews East Jerusalem Activity in 'Violation' of Accords

TA1406082296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 14 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Over the past few days, the Palestinian Authority [PA] has renewed its activities in East Jerusalem, which is a violation of the agreement with Israel. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports:

While most Likud leaders are trying to dispel Palestinian concern about a cessation in the peace process, elements in the PA are exploiting the transitional period between governments in Israel to carry out official PA activity in East Jerusalem in violation of the agreements. Hasan Tahbub, PA's Waqf minister, is using his position to act as a mediator in labor disputes at the al-Maqasid Hospital in East Jerusalem, as well as to make official visits to schools. PA Education Minister Yasir 'Amr came to East Jerusalem on Wednesday [12 June] night to inaugurate an exhibition at a school in the Bayt Hanina neighborhood. PA senior officials participated in a gathering in the sports club in East Jerusalem. Faysal

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al-Husayni convened all the EU consuls at Orient House while the PA's mufti, Shaykh Akram Masabhi, joined the media fanfare and the incitement against the Likud government. In a sermon he gave at al-Aqsa Mosque several days ago broadcast on the Voice of Palestine, he attacked Israel's religious parties, which are demanding Jewish prayers on the Temple Mount and a settlement expansion in Silwan, Ra's al-'Amud, and Har Homa. He said the Jews modus operandi is to destroy, and that silence would lead to a postponement of the victory. In an interview he gave to an Egyptian newspaper this week, the mufti said the intifadah would continue and that the negotiations are only a tactical move.

Palestinian Affairs: PA Mufti Calls For Uprising Against Occupation

TA1406080396 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 14 Jun 96 p 1

[Report by Bill Hutman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem's Palestinian Authority [PA]-appointed mufti has called for Palestinians to "rise up with all their might against the occupation," and warned that he would not stand in the way of suicide bombers.

The statements have raised concern among Israeli officials.

Shaykh Akram Sabri made the statements in his sermon at al-Aqsa last Friday [7 June], and in newspaper interviews following the election victory of Binyamin Netanyahu.

A senior security source said his statements and those of other Palestinian officials, including Planning Minister Nabil Sha'th and Hasan 'Asfur, a senior peace talks negotiator, contain threats of a renewal of the intifadah.

"The Likud has already... promised to take Jerusalem off the negotiating agenda, as if the city is only theirs," Sabri said in his sermon. "For us, there is really no difference between the Likud and Labor. They are both heretics."

"There is no one that can deny the Jews act deviously, as the Koran itself shows, and no one knows when they will be stopped," said Sabri, who was appointed to his post two years ago by PA President Yasir 'Arafat to replace the Jordanian-appointed mufti of Jerusalem.

"We must rise up against the occupation with all our might to achieve what we want. It is forbidden for us to sit quietly. If we are quiet we will not be victorious. It is the obligation of all Moslems to stand by the Palestinians, for the sake of Jerusalem."

Police are reportedly considering summoning Sabri for questioning, on grounds the sermon was inciting. The police spokesman confirmed that an investigation is under way, but said it remains unclear whether he would be called in for questioning.

In an interview with a Ramallah newspaper published several days before the sermon, Sabri was asked if he had issued a religious ruling against carrying out suicide bombings. He answered, "I never issued such a ruling, and the PA never asked me to do so."

Mayor Ehud Olmert included Sabri's office on a list he presented to the outgoing government, demanding the closure of organizations connected with the PA in the city. He said their activity is forbidden according to Israeli law and the peace accords.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Distributes Statement in Syria on al-Sarraj Arrest

JN1306185296 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1550 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 13 Jun (SANA)—The Palestinian national [Islamic] Resistance Movement, Hamas, called on the Palestinian self-rule authority to immediately release the Palestinian human rights campaigner Dr. Iyad al-Sarraj, as well as all Palestinian strugglers. In a statement distributed here today, Hamas described the self-rule authority's repeated arrest of Dr. al-Sarraj, who was tortured and brutally beaten, as a new chapter in its record, which is replete with continued human rights violations, encroachments on national unity, and relinquishments of rights.

Palestinian Affairs: AL-QUDS Calls On Christopher To Address Israelis, Not Arabs

TA1306180496 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 12 Jun 96 p 13

[Editorial: "Christopher's Remarks and the Wrong Address"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To date, U.S. reaction to the Israeli election results has been marked by calmness and polished diplomatic expressions. This reaction did not reflect any disappointment with the Likud victory in the elections, whereas all or most signs had affirmed Washington's tilt toward Shim'on Peres and the Labor Party. During the two weeks since the elections, the stage of adapting to the upcoming Likud era in Israel was launched by the statements of high-ranking officials in Washington. Those statements expressed a readiness to work with any government chosen by the Israeli electorate as long as that government is committed,

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even though verbally, to the continuation of the peace process.

Within this context, one can mention U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent remarks, which this time were addressed to the Arabs, not to Israel. He warned the Arabs not to close the door on the peace process, and also asked them to give Israeli Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu sufficient opportunity to prove his commitment to the continuation of the peace process.

Christopher's remarks were tantamount to throwing a wrench into the works of the upcoming Arab summit, or drawing red lines before this summit so that they would not be crossed. The question that arises is: Are these Israeli or American red lines? The question is particularly pertinent as the Damascus tripartite meeting actually succeeded in breaching the impasse that has pervaded inter-Arab relations since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the war that followed that invasion. Clearly, that impasse pleased many foreign quarters that expected Arab divisions to perpetuate and interact forever.

Obviously, the element of exaggeration could have been the intent of the U.S. secretary's remarks. This element appears clearly if one reads carefully the statements of the leaders of the Damascus meeting and its final communique. The meeting emphasized full commitment to the peace process and an eagerness to continue it. The meeting itself was held in Damascus, and the call to convene the Arab summit in Cairo stemmed from a firm commitment to the peace process. Consequently, the U.S. statements aim at something more than warning the Arabs against "deviating" from this process. They seek to recall that major powers such as the U.S. superpower, which is the most influential inside or outside this region, have interests.

Since the Arab leaders are aware of this fact, which does not need recalling or warning, it would be better if U.S. statements and warnings were addressed not to these pragmatic leaders but to the Israeli side which wants to impose its rigid concepts on both the Arabs and the United States. Hence, this means that Secretary Christopher's warning was addressed to the wrong party, as has been the custom in many of the U.S. diplomatic messages pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Palestinian Affairs: Fatah Group Denies Plans With Hamas To Attack Settlers

JN1306151996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible source at the command of the the Fatah Youth Movement stated that the Youth Movement, being an arm of Fatah, is fully committed to the agreements signed between the PLO and Israel, and that all its activities and internal and external relations proceed from this commitment.

This statement came in response to a HA'ARETZ report citing Israeli security sources on an alleged agreement between Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Fatah Youth Movement, according to which they will carry out operations against settlers. The source said that such baseless reports seek to cause confusion, and doubt Fatah's commitment to its pledges. At the same time, the responsible source denounced the continuous Israeli attempts to create justifications shirking for the agreements signed by the Israeli Government with the PLO.

Palestinian Affairs: Leader of Fatah's al-Shabibah Denies Agreement With Hamas

TA1406083196 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 14 Jun 96 p A

[Report by Sammy Sokol]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The leadership of al-Shabibah, Fatah's youth movement, issued a statement yesterday denying the existence of any agreement or understanding with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] to attack settlers, as HA'ARETZ reported two days ago quoting security sources.

According to al-Shabibah, these security sources are seeking to arouse doubts about Fatah's willingness to fulfill its commitments and to create a suitable climate for the violation of the Israeli Government's commitments to the PLO.

The statement stresses that al-Shabibah is an arm of Fatah and is fully committed to all the agreements signed with Israel.

Al-Shabibah Chairman 'Abd al-Hakim 'Awwad stated yesterday that the report that his organization is planning terrorist attacks was malicious and unfounded. "Al-Shabibah is a public and social organization, not a military body," he stressed. [passage omitted]

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: PA's al-Tarifi Meets Gen. Shahor, Notes Concern With Likud Rule

TA1406080796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 14 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jamil al-Tarifi, a member of the Palestinian Authority [PA], conferred with Major General Oren Shahor, coordinator of activities in the

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territories, and expressed Palestinian concern with the Likud's rise to power. The Palestinian leadership called on Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu to implement the promise of the outgoing government to lift the closure. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem has the details:

[Begin recording] The meeting between al-Tarifi and Shahor was set up to coordinate civilian matters between the PA and the defense establishment, but it naturally also dealt with the change of government in Israel. Al-Tarifi expressed the grave concern of the PA leadership that Prime Minister-elect Netanyahu's policy would lead to a deadlock in the negotiations. Gen. Shahor made it clear to al-Tarifi that only the new political echelon is authorized to decide on policy toward the PA. He promised that Israel would continue dealing with the Palestinians' ongoing civilian problems routinely.

Al-Tarifi raised the issue of security checks on members of the elected PA council at the Erez crossing, and Gen. Shahor made it clear to him that there would be no compromises on security, and that council members must undergo the checks like everybody else.

In the meantime, PA leaders expressed concern about reports in Israel that they plan to return to the intifadah. That possibility exists in theory, "ut in the meantime we are loyal to the peace process and the war against terrorism, they said? Ghassan al-Khatib, of the People's Party, wants to send a direct message to Netanyahu.

[Al-Khatib, in English] It is important, crucial, to respect whatever has been agreed on for now or for the future because any change in the commitments will affect the credibility of the State of Israel and affect in the long run the relations with the Palestinians.

[Ben-Menahem] Al-Khatib also called on the new prime minister not to create new facts on the ground, such as settlements, which harm the chances of reaching an honorable permanent settlement. He also requested the lifting of the closure in order to permit the entry of laborers from the territories into Israel. [end recording]

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Algeria

Algeria: Public Prosecutor Assassinated in Algiers

LD1306155896 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, there has been a new attack on a judge. This time, it was the deputy director of public prosecutions of the court of Algiers, who was assassinated yesterday morning in the southern suburb of the capital. Mokhtar Benkrouache was 49 years old. Nobody has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Algeria: FIS European Supporters Issue Newsletter

MS1306161896 Southall THE ENLIGHTENMENT in English 4 Jun 96

[Newsletter "publicizing the Islamic Struggle in Algeria," published by Islamic Salvation Front "supporters in Europe" — quotation marks as received; double parentheses denote source's use of brackets; received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Editorial:

An Algeria built on fire is doomed to burn down!

Praise be to Allah, Who Says:"Grievously hateful is it in the sight of Allah that you say that which you do not." ((Koran, Surat As-Saff,61:3, translation into English Yusuf Ali)).

One of the most important value in Islam is to honour one's engagements and one of the most indecent characteristic is the contradiction between what one says and does. Such values have been deeply rooted in muslim societies and are now, a part of the "collective scale" which defines the "good" and the "Bad". When people persist in a schizophrenic discrepancy between their speech and actions, they will end up with nobody trusting them anymore nor believing in their talks.

This is unfortunately the state of the Ummah today. The wider the contradiction between the ruler speech and his action is, the further apart the "street world" drives away from that of the "palace". Some rulers, in order to delay the irreversible mistrust in them, from the people, will not hesitate to use "media hypnotise" by "blowing off" all of the opposition "lights", leaving just theirs for the people to see and, by muzzling down all other voices, leaving only theirs for the people to hear.

Others push the above characteristic beyond "contradictory speech" and start to use a more complex mean of illusion in a form of a theatrical set up aimed at "embarking " in their propaganda, some of those who may still be resilient to their "phonic stories".

Propaganda seems to follow the advance of technology as that of radio to TV! The wind of History is blowing in a direction as to give people at large, the right to have a decisive say about the running of their affairs at every levelf the social structure. This is at least, partially due to the advance in technology which has "democratised" access to information and has facilitated communication. In this aspect, the trend seems more or less irreversible. As the citizen becomes more informed, dictatorial regimes as those in many muslim countries, will have to either update their "propaganda apparatus" or, and if possible, cut information channels of which the citizen is the recipient. The dictatorship "knows" that the less informed the citizen is, the greater its own survival and everlasting are. Inversely, the more informed the citizen is, the more obvious the contradiction between what the dictatorship says and does, becomes. With respect to the above, Algeria is like many muslim countries where any alternative voice is crunched without mercy. Algeria exception today, is due to the fact that blood is running heavily and the dictatorship wants this fact to be a "state secret" as not to scare away potential foreign investors. That is why Algeria is nowadays given the attribute of "a country of war without images". Since the coup d'Etat of january 1992, the Algerian citizen has been living in a media environment entirely controlled by the regime. Of course here and their some "independent" newspapers try to do their "proper job" but it seems like there is a tacite bargain with the regime which roughly says:"for a single line of polite critique against the regime, a levy of three pages of free Islamists image tarnishing, is to be paid off!". In this kind of environment the Algerian citizen has stopped making judgement on the "contents" of the regime messages which has always been overflowing of propaganda, and has moved to read the "form" of the messages rather. It is a very informative reading for those who want to learn this "passionate game". For example, a year and a half ago, the Algerian political opposition has elaborated a document known as "the national contract" which had the contents of presenting a realistic minimum consensus over which a healthy political life could be build for Algeria AND a "middle of the road" type of solution to end the ongoing bloodbath. The arrogant dictatorship rejected what it called "pax Romana" "globally and in details. The dictatorship did not elaborate,nor proposed some amendments,nor added something,nor argumented its rejection....No, the dictatorship is above all that does not come from under it. Up to now (a year and a half later), most of the Algerian people do not know the "contents" of the document and neither has the dictatorship presented a single logical argument for it rejection.

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The dictatorship "form" of reaction has convinced many that it lacks the political will of ending the bloodshed and that the only "peace" it wants is "Pax Militaria".

Today the military regime chief propagandist Mouhoubi is working to cut off the Algerian citizen channels of information to make him/her vulnerable to the propaganda. The "normalisation and standardisation" of what kind of information the Algerian citizen ought to have access to and be able to exchange, is like "swimming against the natural flow of History", particularly when such "code of information" is unilaterally elaborated by the dictatorship. As for General Zeroual, he has submitted a document which according to its source, is supposed to lay down "a consensus for a fair political life" but without any mentioning of how to stop the bloodshed. General Zeroual has asked some of the opposition to "elaborate, make propositions, amende it, add something, debate it...". Some of the opposition has started to "answer" others however don't feel concerned by the elaboration of a new constitution which fundamental origin is an illegal coup d'Etat and a complete disregard of the constitution itself. This later part of the opposition do not want to waist time arguing about details of an "architecture plan" (new constitution) for a "construction" (a new Algeria) to be build on the top of a "fire" (war)! This opposition do not want to be duped and take a "shadow" for the "real object". The reality in this game is what is going on behind the stage. So it is more wise just to relax and wait for the symbolic 5th of July to see how many medaillons and promotions are distributed to understand the "game" and what kind of pressure each personage is under.

Echoes of the Press — "Why I broke ranks on policy in Algeria"

Following is an article published in "THE EUROPEAN" of the 30 May-05 Jun 1996 under the pen of Roger Faligot reporting from Paris. [beginning of article] "Young intelligence analyst in the service of the French government has told "THE EUROPEAN" why she decided to risk her career by openly criticising France's controversial policy in Algeria.

At 33, Lucile Provost, a pseudonym, has spent three and a half years working at the French embassy in Algiers, studying and reporting on the Algerian civil war for the foreign ministry at the Quai d'Orsay in Paris. Now she rejects the policy of unqualified support for the regime of Liamine Zeroual, the former general elected president, and its policy of repression of Islamic groups.

"We should do the same as the United States or Britain and consider Islamism as a serious political alternative,whether we like it or not,to a corrupt regime," Provost told "THE EUROPEAN".

The parties allied in the Rome Group-opposition forces who produced a charter for Algeria's return to democracy at a conference in Rome last year, or "the real opposition" as Provost calls them-have now been fragmented,she said.

As a result, the paramilitary wings have taken control. For the future, however, Provost is convinced that only negotiations on the Rome model can bring an end to the ferocious war.

Diplomats knew that, she said, "but,unfortunately,the political decision-makers around [President Jacques] Chirac have opted for supporting the repression. It is high time that French policy in Algeria ceased to be dictated by secret agents."

Provost, a graduate of the elite ENA civil service college, took the unprecedented step on her return to Paris of publishing a book, under her pseudonym, that criticised official French policy.

"What I saw in Algiers was so much at variance with the official line that I felt I had a duty to the French public to tell the truth as I saw it," Provost said.

The prestigious daily newspaper "Le MONDE" commended the book, but the personal consequences for Provost were serious.

One morning in April she arrived at work at the "Centre d'Analyse et de Prospective", the analysis office at the Quai d'Orsay, only to discover that the locks of her office had been changed overnight. She was allowed to retrieve some personal effects and was requested to leave her security pass behind her when she left, which she refused to do.

Later she received a letter informing her that she was suspended for a breach of confidentiality. A Direction de la Security du Territoire (DST) counter-intelligence team interrogated her. She still officially has a job at the ministry, but her future is uncertain.

Last year, she was the anonymous author of the influential report on Algeria published by the Paris Saint-Simon Foundation. It stressed the need for discussion and forecast a real danger that the conflict would spread to French soil.

Weeks later bombs planted by the GIA, the radical Armed Islamic Group,exploded in central Paris. A number of incidents attributed to Islamists were orchestrated by Algerian government agents,Provost claimed,arguing on the basis of information gathered by the diplomatic service.

"I am doing all this because I love this country" said the fair-haired Provost,with a note of sadness.

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"I want the citizens of France to understand what is really happening and what would constitute a proper strategy, designed to help both the French and the Algerian people." [end of article]

For whom is "Yahyia El Fitna" turning?

Many observers of the Algerian scene are increasingly asking the question of for whom the prime minister Ouyahia is working. Mr Ouyahia who has already been nicknamed "Yahyia Al Fitna" (long life to discordance) because he has not missed a media opportunity to "stir the knife in the still open wound" within the Algerian society. Mr Ouyahia language is becoming more and more that of a "war lover" in perfect diapason with a certain clique within the military hierarchy. He has also been noticed that he does not seem to have any scruple to "cash in" political dividends by taking advantage of the misery of the actual war victims.

Many observers have also noticed that Mr Ouyahia and some of his ministers seem to be doing their upmost in provoking a general social protest. Continuing his "racketting policy" toward the hard workers, Mr Ouyahia this time, with the "complementary financial law" did not even spare pensioners who are known to get a revaluation of their pension "once in every century" given the fact that there is no one to defend them. The economical sectors which are "ready to explode" are enough to paralyse the country. Is there a hidden agenda some where? Some see in that, a deliberate manoeuvre to "force" the IMF and the WB to add some more loans under chapter:"social cost of structural adjustment". However many are asking the question about the timing of many "happenings" following General Zeroual's memorandum including Lt-General Nezzar declarations, Mr Ouyahia provocations and other groups "gesticulations". This probably reflects a situation hardly visible from outside the "palace"?

Egypt

Egypt: Musa Receives French Minister's Message on Arab Summit

NC1406095096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0900 GMT 14 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Jun (MENA)—French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette has expressed his great appreciation of President Husni Mubarak's initiative to invite Arab kings, amirs, and presidents for an Arab summit in Cairo on 21-22 June.

In a message to Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, conveyed today by France's Ambassador in Cairo Patrick Leclercq, de Charette said that under the current circumstances such a move is favorable and useful to show an Arab commitment to a peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

De Charette expressed his hope that this Arab gathering for peace will have a positive impact in Israel.

The French foreign minister praised Egypt's effective diplomatic efforts in this respect and hoped they will succeed.

Egypt: Newspapers Continue To Comment on Arab Summit

NC1406103596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0510 GMT 14 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Jun (MENA)—Cairo newspapers today hope that the expected Arab summit will be a clear and sincere message to Israel, the United States, Europe, and the international community as a whole. The message is to assert to everyone that, while the Arab nation has accepted peace with Israel as a strategy for promoting the common interests of all the region's nations, it does not agree to surrender to a narrow Israeli vision of peace, a vision represented by the policies of Israeli Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu and rightist parties. The message is also to assert to everyone that the Arab nation will not tolerate relinquishing Arab land, the papers add.

The newspapers note that foremost among the hopes pinned on this summit is its success in reviving Arab solidarity with a view to taking a strong Arab stand on challenges facing the Arab nation.

AL-AHRAM's chief editor Ibrahim Nafi' entitles his weekly article: "The Coming Arab Summit and the Challenges of the Israeli Threat." He says the Arab summit's message is that the Arab nation has not and will not accept the relinquishing of Arab land and rights in exchange for this peace. He adds that the message is that the Arab nation has not and will not approve of the concept of security applying exclusively to Israel's security and according to Israel's own calculations at the expense of pan-Arab security and Arab land and rights.

Security, he notes, must be provided for all countries of the region not for just one at the expense of the other countries. The overweening position of one country in the region based on strength of arms cannot be accepted, he says. He adds that all must be equal in their belief in peace, in enjoying security, and in rights and duties. Therefore, he notes, the paramount Arab demand to rid the region of nuclear weapons cannot be relinquished. Not a single inch of Arab land will be conceded no matter what the Israeli claims, nor any Palestinian Arab rights, he adds.

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The writer says if Israel wants to be a good neighbor, it should deal with those around it according to the principle of equality in rights and duties. If the current Arab situation seems to Israel and the international community not to be the best in terms of comprehensive Arab solidarity, he notes, the Arab nation has nevertheless proved many times that it is an undying entity that does not give up even if it sometimes experiences divisions. In times of danger, he adds, a sleeping giant wakes up and the dispersed flock unites to defend its survival and existence.

The writer concludes his article by saying: This is the message the hoped-for summit will send to the entire world very soon. This is the challenge we are now facing as this summit approaches and at subsequent summits and in continuous considered Arab moves.

AL-AKHBAR publishes an editorial headlined "Great Hopes Expected From the Cairo Arab Summit." It says the mere holding of a collective summit has been a great hope and, thank God, it is about to be realized. The Arab nations also have great aspirations that all Arabs will unite behind one stand and devise a suitable mechanism to achieve this "oneness" on the Arab-Israeli peace process in general and on our position in light of the political change in Israel after the right, led by Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu, won power, it adds.

The paper says although this is a very important issue that made the holding of a collective summit imperative, there are other matters concerning pan-Arab security on which definitive and clear stands must be taken. These are issues related to Arab-Iranian ties in view of evidence that Iran is involved in backing and aiding certain terrorist groups in more than one country.

The paper expresses the belief that this topic will be given the interest and seriousness it deserves because it has a direct impact on pan-Arab security. Moreover there is the recent danger represented by the growing military ties between Israel and Turkey after the signing of a military accord between Ankara and Tel Aviv, it adds.

The paper concludes its editorial by saying: What remains in this context is the Arabs' stand on a collective ban on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, namely nuclear weapons, which Israel refuses to sign.

Meanwhile, AL-JUMHURIYAH carries an editorial entitled: "The Cairo Summit and Joint Arab Action." It says the wheel of unified Arab action is in motion again, thanks to Egypt's and President Husni Mubarak's awareness of pan-Arab responsibility and Egypt's role as the biggest Arab country. Egypt's principles, it adds, rely on the principles of Arab unity and ending the divisions among them.

The paper hopes that the summit's outcome will be commensurate with the hopes pinned on it. It notes the Arab countries' enthusiasm for the summit at leadership, government, and public level. It remarks that this attitude will have an effect on the two topics placed on the Cairo summit's agenda. The first is consolidation of efforts, coordination, cooperation, and Arab solidarity to create a strong Arab position on the challenges facing the Arab nation. The second topic is the evaluation of the progress of the peace process and demonstrating a unified Arab stand to ensure the continuation of the peace process.

The paper notes that these are the obligations of states and nations that have chosen a comprehensive and balanced peace, not obligations by governments or parties that are liable to change as these governments and parties take power or depart.

Egypt: Minister Interviewed on Military Production

JN1306135896 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 7 Jun 96 p 20

[Interview with Dr. Muhammad al-Ghamrawi, Egyptian minister of state for military production, by Ashraf al-Ja'ar in Cairo; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [al-Ja'ar] First of all, how do you assess the Egyptian military production and what level has it reached?

[Al-Ghamrawi] The military production in Egypt has made great strides under President Husni Mubarak. Proceeding from the Egyptian political leadership's belief that peace should be protected by power, Egypt made this stride in the fields of weapon modernization, production of new kinds of weapons, joint manufacturing, and conducting research.

As a matter of fact, we have completed two major projects characterized by their magnitude and the use of high technology. The first project is a tank plant, which manufactures the advanced U.S. M1 and A1 tanks and the second project is a plant for manufacturing heavy artillery. These two plants were set up to meet the needs of the Egyptian Armed Forces and to make up for the shortage in tanks and heavy artillery.

At present, there is a particular interest in providing a complete network of Egyptian weaponry to supply the Armed Forces with all that they need in terms of equipment and weapons, in addition to keeping abreast with the latest armor systems in the world.

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[Al-Ja'ar] Are the U.S. tanks and heavy artillery entirely manufactured at these two plants, or are they only assembled there?

[Al-Ghamrawi] In military production, there is no such a thing as manufacturing equipment all in one factory, from A to Z. We import some parts from abroad and manufacture others locally. For example, tank guns are 100 percent manufactured locally. The other parts of the tank are imported from the United States, except for the chassis which are manufactured locally. The same thing is also followed in the United States itself where certain parts of the tank are manufactured by various plants and companies, and then all the parts are assembled together at the main plant.

It is important to note here that manufacturing tank guns in Egypt is a large leap by the Egyptian industry in general. Moreover, the Egyptian plant which manufactures this tank is considered one of the largest plants for advanced military production in the world and is equipped with the most advanced technological and military production equipment.

[Al-Ja'ar] Some people say that manufacturing an advanced U.S. tank costs more than importing it from the United States. What is your response?

[Al-Ghamrawi] First of all, those who say this base their opinion and calculations on the assumption that the plant was set up to manufacture a limited number of tanks and does so only to meet the demand of the Egyptian Armed Forces. Therefore, their calculations are made on this wrong assumption. As a matter of fact, when this plant was established, several considerations were taken into account:

1. The plant was not set up with the aim of merely supplying the Egyptian Armed Forces alone with tanks, but for export purposes as well.

2. This plant's role is not confined to manufacturing tanks only, but goes beyond that to include the manufacturing of armored personnel carriers and to do maintenance and repair work on foreign-made tanks, which are part of the weapons used by the Egyptian Forces. The plant also produces spare parts for various equipment.

3. In designing this plant, we took into account that it will do all the maintenance and repair work on U.S. as well as other tanks, particularly since our experience in providing maintenance service and repairs for tanks manufactured in East [European] states goes back to 1972. These tanks include the T-34, the TTR-50, the Topas, and others. The tanks which were produced in this plant and were used by the Egyptian forces have truly proven to be highly efficient. Moreover, we have signed contracts with some sisterly Arab states in order to export these advanced tanks.

I can safely say that all the allegations about the economic unfeasibility of the project are totally baseless and founded on incorrect and inaccurate information. I can also assert the fact that this plant is an asset and a source of pride for the Egyptian technological and military industry. No doubt, these rumors are based on rancor against the development of the Egyptian military production, particularly since this plant is one of the largest tank plants in the world. [passage omitted]

[Al-Ja'ar] Does Egyptian military production face any external pressure?

[Al-Ghamrawi] Egypt does not accept any pressure from anybody, and all countries in the world know this very well. However, the world weaponry market is characterized by fierce competition among manufacturing countries. We, on our part, welcome this competition because it prompts us to promote the quality of our production and makes us more determined to face challenges and enhance our technological production. [passage omitted]

Libya

Libya: Unity Secretary, Iraqi Foreign Minister Hold Talks

LD1306182796 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1715 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tripoli, 13 Jun (JANA) — The Libyan Arab-Iraqi talks on closer relations between the two countries started in Tripoli this morning in the presence of the brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Unity [Jum'ah al-Fazzani] and Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad al-Sahhaf.

The brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Unity made an opening speech. In it, he welcomed the Iraqi foreign minister and his accompanying delegation to the Great Jamahiriyah and praised the strong bonds of brotherhood between the two fraternal countries.

The brother secretary said that both countries were in the same trench in their struggle against the forces of evil and imperialism that were trying to infringe upon their independence and freedom, and reiterated that the unjust measures against the Great Jamahiriyah were a link in a chain concocted by the crusading West. It started with the blockade against the Arab people of Iraq, he affirmed. [passage omitted]

Brother Muhammad al-Sahhaf also made a speech. In it, he said he was happy to be in the Great Jamahiriyah in order to contribute to the efforts under way to bolster

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fraternal relations between the brethren of the same people in both countries.

Al-Sahhaf reiterated in his speech Iraq's total backing for the Great Jamahiriyah in its confrontation with the unjust measures imposed by Western powers. [passage omitted]

Afterward, a review of the resolutions, which were adopted at the first session of the Libyan Arab-Iraqi joint Committee, was made. On this occasion, both sides reiterated the need to implement them and to bolster further the cooperation between the two countries in all fields.

Both sides also reiterated the need to coordinate between the two countries in the fields of popular action and expertise in agriculture, industry, housing, transport, and animal resources.

Agreement on the next preliminary meeting of the Libyan Arab-Iraqi joint committee was reached at the meeting.

Morocco

Morocco: Human Rights Body Claims Torture Used in Civil Law Cases

LD1306222896 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A Moroccan human rights organization revealed in its report the existence of flagrant violations of human rights in Morocco. The details of the report are with Fatima Zohra Arous:

[Arous] Torture is a method used by Moroccan police in investigating civil law cases, after it used to be exercised in issues of political nature.

The Moroccan Human Rights Organization confirmed this in a report published today, in which it pointed out that it has recorded more than 20 cases of deaths of Moroccans when they were being interrogated by the judicial police.

The Moroccan Human Rights Organization pointed out that administrative investigation and judicial searches of those responsible for practising torture was nonexistent.

The organization confirms that those responsible for acts of physical and psychological torture remain unpunished and are generally unpunished for torture.

Tunisia

Tunisia: Ben Ali Carries Out Limited Government Reshuffle

LD1306175796 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali met this morning Prime Minister Hamed Karoui who briefed the head of state on his friendship and working visit to Algeria. [passage omitted]

Following the meeting, the prime minister announced that his excellency the president of the republic has decided to reshuffle the government, according to which he appointed Abdallah Kellal, minister of state and national defense minister; Chedli Neffati, social affairs minister; Sadok Rabah, transport minister; and Mondher Zenaidi, trade minister. Former Trade Minister Slaheddine M'Barek will be called upon to perform other duties.

President Zine El Abidine Ben decided to appoint Abdelaziz Ben Dhia as secretary general of the Constitutional Democratic Rally.

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Qatar

Qatar: French Foreign Minister on Visit to Qatar, Bilateral Ties

BR1406094796 (Internet) French Foreign Ministry WWW in French 12 Jun 96

[Press conference by French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette in Doha, Qatar, on 11 June]

[FBIS Translated Text] [de Charette] Ladies and gentlemen, just a few words to open this press conference. I will then give you the opportunity to ask me any questions you may have.

I would firstly like to say what a pleasure it is for me to be in Qatar. I have wanted to come here for a long time because of the very close ties that exist between France and your country. In this first year a number of important events have cropped up, including those that kept me in Syria, Lebanon, and Israel for two weeks and which forced me to rearrange my timetable. Finally, though, I am here, and very pleased to be here too.

As you know, France attaches a great deal of significance to its relations with the whole of the Middle East. The president of the Republic stated this fact quite categorically on his visit to Egypt a few months ago. In particular in the speech he gave to the University of Cairo he reiterated the priority that France has given to everything concerning the Middle East. France's relations with the Middle East go back a very long way and I would say today that they are traditional, based around four principles.

The first principle is that of simple dialogue between equal partners with the desire, of course, to respect the identity and specific nature of each other. Second is the right of people to freely determine their own fate and defend their independence and security. These are of course issues of great interest to all Middle Eastern nations. Third, France supports the Arab peoples' aspirations to solidarity and unity. This aspiration is probably one of the most original and finest features of the people of the Middle East. Fourth, France supports the aspirations of the peoples of the Middle East for peace and openness and supports everything that opposes extremism.

I am in Qatar on the first stage of a tour of the Persian Gulf. I chose to begin in Doha because of the ties of friendship that exist between us. I have met with my Qatari counterpart, Shaykh bin Jabr Mohammad Bin Jassem Al Khalifa, whom I knew from meetings in New York and Paris, and it was good to be able to visit him. Over time he has become a good friend and I think we share many views and have the same ambitions. I had the very great honor of being received by the Emir, Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, and naturally I am very grateful to him for granting me an audience. During these meetings we listed all the questions of interest to French-Qatari cooperation. We have seen that these relations between France and Qatar are very close, ancient even, and range from military cooperation to economic and cultural cooperation. They signify very close, warm, and friendly links between our two countries. I can reveal to you that we have decided together to give fresh impetus to French-Qatari cooperation. France feels very involved in both the security of Qatar and projects for the development of your country and we want to participate fully in these. In short it is with real pleasure and even with real enthusiasm that I have been able to make this brief trip to Doha and, of course, I hope this is the first of many visits. Thank you.

[Correspondent] Qatar Press Agency. France supports the peace process. Do you think the new Israeli Government does too? What are your thoughts on the upcoming Arab summit?

[De Charette] First let me answer your second question. France can only support the approach of those Arab nations that decide to meet for talks at what is a particularly important moment for the Middle East. I believe this to be a positive move. Where Israel is concerned, I think that our duty — quite natural, for countries that observe these things — is to consider that each country is free to choose its leaders. Therefore it is not up to me to make any kind of judgments in this respect. Of course we all await with interest, perhaps even with impatience, the positions that will be taken by the new Israeli Government when this has been formed in all serenity. With the serenity of old soldiers, if you pardon me the expression. Finally let me add one last point. The aim of everyone in this region must be peace. This peace process is the only one capable of resolving the difficulties and of overcoming differences — dialogue and peace. Of course in this dialogue and in this peace it goes without saying that promises must be kept to. Commitments have been made in the past and are the subject of agreements. These must be scrupulously adhered to and implemented. Let me just make one last observation to reply to your question, and maybe I am being rather long-winded in my reply, but this is a key issue. With the election of our new president France marked its determination to be present and highly active in the Middle East where we have many friends. You have been able to see for yourselves that this commitment to be present and active, as expressed by the president in Cairo, is not just empty words. We have shown that we are capable of putting our words into action. I can tell you now that we are determined

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to continue to be highly active with a high profile in the service of peace and alongside our many friends.

[Correspondent] Minister, I would like to praise you personally for your worthy efforts in favor of Lebanon. I would like, on this subject, to ask you what the chances are of France playing an effective and active role in favor of the Middle East peace process as you did in favor of Lebanon. What is more, there are fears in the Arab countries in the face of the "no's," the great many "no's" of Mr. Netanyahu in his recent electoral statements: no to the Palestinian state, no to a withdrawal from the Golan Heights — which is, as you know, a crucial issue —, no to the partitioning of Jerusalem, and no to freezing the settlements on the West Bank and Gaza. Thank you minister.

[De Charette] Well, sir, first of all you should know that I am very touched by your compliments. Then, I have told you that we are looking at things with serenity. I do not think we should be too impatient. We are not going to change people's ideas. France has made its positions clear on many subjects regarding the Middle East, especially with regard to the future of Palestine, a subject to which we attach much importance. The positions should not be changed one iota. As things stand you have been able to see for yourself that France has been careful not to take sides. Of course we will be very careful about what all parties are saying, their decisions, and their attitudes, and we want everyone to work for peace. We are very attentive to concerns about everyone's security. However, we are also very aware of the legitimate aspirations of the peoples concerned and, with regard to Palestine, you know that France has very good relations with its leaders which make us very attentive and understanding about the concerns they are expressing. Anyway, you can be assured, sir, that in the weeks and months to follow we will be making as great a contribution as possible to the continuation of the peace process.

[Correspondent] President 'Arafat, a little while ago, declared his desire to proclaim a Palestinian state with its capital in Jerusalem. If he did proclaim this would France recognize such a state?

[De Charette] It is already hard enough to reply to the questions that lie before us without having to answer your questions about possible future events. However, I know Yasir 'Arafat well and I would like to say I can call him a friend. I know what he thinks. He himself knows that France has always supported him in his efforts and what I would call his long march.

[Correspondent] I have a two-part question. The first part is: Could you talk to us in detail about the issues that have dominated the French-Qatari discussions this morning? The second part is: What is France's position with regard to Iraq? Observers have described this position as having slipped compared to the stance taken in the past.

[De Charette] The French position has slipped?

[Correspondent] Yes, it has been said that the French position before was asking for an end to the embargo — a total lifting of the ban — but now France appears to be keen on applying the Security Council resolutions...

[De Charette] The French position has never changed on this subject. However, I will go back to that after I have replied to your first question. As you know, French-Qatari cooperation is strong and goes back a long way. It covers all possible areas of cooperation. Of course we spoke of this both with the Emir and with my colleague in your Foreign Ministry. France and Qatar have also decided to continue with military cooperation which we believe to be very important.

We are also cooperating in some very important domains, oil and gas in particular, but in other areas too, and we have made plans to give fresh impetus here. In other words, the French policy, which my interlocutors have also seen fit to adopt as their own, lies both in continuity and renewal. Our aim is to continue with what has been done but also to broaden the scope of this work and develop it in new areas. We agreed that in the coming weeks we will work together very closely, the Qatari foreign minister and myself, to list all the projects that we can carry out jointly so that we can, with our respective heads of state, decide to enhance this cooperation. We also spoke with the Emir in particular about everything concerning cultural cooperation, talking especially of the training of managers, senior Qatari managers. As you know, the universities of Qatar and Nantes, one of the finest in France, are twinned. We have agreed to add a new dimension to that, too, so as to meet the demand placed on us to support the presence of the French language in Qatar. Naturally, we also reviewed the regional and international situation and exchanged our views and feelings on this subject. This was a working visit, a working visit I consider was very fruitful. I really do believe that this marks the departure point for a strengthening, substantial, I hope, of French-Qatari cooperation.

Let me now say a few words, seeing as you asked me, about France's position regarding Iraq. I would like to make my points very simply. France has not and will not change its policy. First of all we are very pleased at the decisions made concerning the application of Resolution 986. I must say that France played a key role to ensure that we arrived at this situation. I myself received Mr. Tariq 'Aziz in Paris in December

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to stress to him the importance that we attach to the application of this resolution. We are painfully aware of the suffering of the Iraqi people. This resolution was intended precisely to ease their suffering by allowing the Iraqi authorities to export a certain amount of oil in exchange for first aid and humanitarian products. I very much appreciate the fact that the Iraqi Government has taken the necessary steps in this regard. Under UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali the talks were initiated and finally succeeded. I am very pleased about that. I would like the last questions of the practicalities to be resolved as soon as possible because, I repeat, the international community and the Iraqi authorities must be very careful and pay great heed to the fate of the sorely tested civilian population. Otherwise, France has constantly maintained that the Security Council resolutions should be applied with immediate effect and especially article 22 of Resolution 687 which will then make it possible to lift the embargo. That is the basis of the French position. These are the only considerations that guide us: Respecting the Security Council resolutions, that is to say the decisions of the international community, and ensuring that, when they are applied fairly and sincerely by both sides, they will help resolve the problems we are facing.

[Correspondent] Minister, France has good relations with Iran. It also has a defense agreement with the United Arab Emirates. However, these two countries are at loggerheads over the islands, the three islands. What role can France play in helping to settle this dispute?

[De Charette] As you know, France is in favor of settling problems and disputes that might arise by peaceful means. Of these peaceful means — and there are many — there is mediation, arbitrage, and recourse to the International Court of Justice. This is the procedure that has been opted for. France wants this conflict to be resolved peacefully in that way.

[Correspondent] You said a while ago that establishing peace across the region would need the commitment of all sides and the application of agreements already concluded. In light of the recent statements by Mr. Netanyahu in which he called for a new peace conference to be held, do you not think that this is in itself a violation of the commitments and agreements already made? What is your view of this Israeli call for a new conference?

[De Charette] I think I have already replied, more or less, about the situation created by the recent elections in Israel. I do not want to repeat what I said. However, I will sum it up in one sentence. We must wait for the government to be formed and for the official statements that will be made when this government officially takes office before we can assess the situation. Meanwhile France will be very attentive, you can be sure of that, but will retain the necessary calmness. I repeat that we are pursuing just one aim: victory for peace, a just and lasting peace.

[Correspondent] We have seen how France is trying to play an influential role...

[De Charette] It is not trying to, sir, it is playing a very influential role...

[Correspondent] We can see that there is also a clear competition between the United States and France, and we have seen this in Lebanon and in the Persian Gulf. With this in mind, how would you describe your relations with Iran, and how far has dialogue between Europe and Iran got? Do you think that Paris can rival the important role that the United States plays in this region?

[De Charette] Quite frankly I have never seen this competition you are talking about. In everything we have done in the last few months I have seen that, on the contrary, the French and Americans have been working in close coordination, pulling together in the same direction, even if it is true that each has his preferences and privileged relations here and there. Both countries can therefore contribute its own ideas. However, we have done so from the outset in the spirit of friendship that binds us to the United States. Where Iran is concerned, as you know, Europe — not just France — is having what is described now as "critical dialogue" with Iran. That means that on the one hand, contrary to the pressure we have been put under, we continue to have relations with Iran. At the same time, we will be sure to clearly voice our concerns. France wants Iran to contribute effectively to peace and international security, in terms of ensuring the collective security in the Persian Gulf region and in the EU and France, in terms of respecting the sovereignty of nations and non-interference in the domestic affairs of others, and in terms of fighting terrorism, be it the terrorism threatening the Middle East peace process or that which threatens the private lives of people anywhere else in the world. There you are ladies and gentlemen, thank you all very much. Thank you for having listened to me.

[Correspondent] Have you discussed the visit of his highness the Emir to France before the end of this year?

[De Charette] So you want to set the timetable then?

[Correspondent] No I was just asking...

[De Charette] We have issued an invitation to the Emir and he is welcome to come and visit us whenever he pleases.

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Iraq: MENA Reports Standoff Near Republican Guard Facility

NC1306155096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1500 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Baghdad, 13 Jun (MENA)—The relationship between Iraq and the UN Special Commission [UNSCOM] has entered a new and difficult stage, with the UN inspectors currently in Iraq determined to enter and inspect a Republican Guard facility.

A MENA correspondent who visited this Iraqi facility in Baghdad's al-Qadisiyah suburb today says UNSCOM inspectors are now surrounding the building in all directions.

Some 20 UNSCOM inspectors and experts are surrounding the building; they are headed by Russian Nikita Semidovic [name as transliterated], an expert in missile and chemical weaponry.

Six UNSCOM cars, carrying a number of these experts, are parked in front of all entrances and exits to this facility.

Iraqi sources at the site said the experts have been staying around the building since yesterday morning, and that they are replaced from time to time. The sources said there has been no problem from the experts so far. [passage omitted]

The sources explained that UN inspectors have never visited this site before. The sources did not rule out UNSCOM inspectors carrying out aerial surveillance of the site later with their helicopters, which are stationed in the control center in Baghdad.

Russian expert Nikita Semidovic, head of the UN inspection team that is currently surrounding the site, made a brief statement to journalists, in which he said that he has an authorization from Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the UN Inspection Commission, regarding his current mission in Iraq.

He said he is in touch with Ekeus and is keeping him up to date on developments.

Asked how long the inspection team will remain in front of the Iraqi site, he said: "We are awaiting instruction." [passage omitted]

Iraq: Smidovich—UN Team To Stay at Site Pending Instructions

JN1306162596 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1600 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 13 Jun (INA) — Nikita Smidovich, head of a UN inspection team surrounding one of the sites of the Republican Guard in Baghdad, asserted to correspondents of Arab and international news agencies, television networks, and INA that his team has not been subjected to any harassment or threat from the Iraqi side.

Speaking to reporters, Smidovich said his team has been surrounding the building since yesterday morning and that the chairman of the Special Commission instructed them to stay at the site. Answering a question, he said that his team withdrew from a site in Abu Ghurayb where they did not observe anything. The team then headed for this site and will remain here until it receives instructions from the chairman of the Special Commission. He added that the experts with him are specialists in chemical, biological, and ballistic missiles.

The site is surrounded by a 53-person inspection team, of which more than 20 people are running a 24-hour shift to watch the site from all directions. An Iraqi official who escorts the inspection teams told reporters there are no problems between the two sides and that there is cooperation and coordination between them.

Iraq: UN Arms Inspectors Maintain Vigil Around Iraqi Sites

NC1406104196 Paris AFP in English 0938 GMT 14 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, June 14 (AFP) — UN inspectors maintained their vigil around suspected Iraqi weapons sites for a fourth day Friday [14 June] as the crisis mounted over Iraq's refusal to allow them entry.

The weapons inspectors "will stay at the site" used by Iraq's elite Republican Guard at the center of Baghdad, a spokesman for the UN Special Commission on disarming Iraq (UNSCOM) told AFP.

Since Tuesday, Iraq has denied the 50-member inspection team, which is searching for banned weapons programs, access to three military sites linked to the Republican Guard, citing national security reasons.

One facility is in central Baghdad and two others are just outside the capital.

Three UN vehicles have blocked the main entrance to the Baghdad site and two others were parked nearby.

Chief inspector Nikita Smidovich said Thursday that the "head of UNSCOM, Rolf Ekeus, has asked us to stay here for as long as it takes."

Smidovich's team is making snap searches of military sites to ensure Iraq is not concealing material banned in the 1991 Gulf War disarmament resolutions, including chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs.

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As the standoff continued, the UN Security Council was set Friday to discuss proposals for sending a tough message to Baghdad that would lay the groundwork for a possible military intervention.

If the Council adopts a draft statement as proposed by Britain and the United States, it would declare Iraq "in material breach" of the main ceasefire resolution that ended the Gulf War for Kuwait.

Iraq: 'Aziz Comments on UN Council Statement

JN1306174896 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1345 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 13 Jun (INA) — Commenting on a statement issued yesterday by the Security Council on Iraq's relationship with the Special Commission, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz said: The position we have communicated to the Security Council, which I declared in my statement yesterday, is clear, fair, and compatible with a legal and balanced interpretation of Resolution 687.

In a statement to INA, Tariq 'Aziz said: We have asked the Security Council, through its permanent members and current president, to be present during the inspection missions ordered by the executive chairman of the Special Commission. This is because the Security Council is the party that issues the resolutions and that appointed the Special Commission and its executive chairman. This is also because after five years of hard work, we want the Security Council to know for sure the truth about claims that Iraq is hiding documents and materials. We also want the Security Council to know directly what has been achieved and what — according to the claims — Iraq has not achieved so far from the commitments stipulated in Section C of Resolution 687, so that the Security Council would fulfill its commitments toward Iraq in line with this resolution, starting with the implementation of Paragraph 22 of the resolution.

Tariq 'Aziz said: Had we hidden banned materials at some sites, as claimed by the UN Special Commission circles, we would not have presented this constructive proposal, which was understood and welcomed by a number of the Security Council members. However, the Americans and British rejected the proposal for a reason which is clear to us; namely, they do not want to see a very clear, final stand. They seek to maintain the state of suspicion and uncertainty in order to maintain the economic sanctions on Iraq and to achieve things that are not sought by the council, and in which there is no specific interest.

Tariq 'Aziz added: Our proposal does not encroach on the role of the chairman of the Special Commission. The Special Commission was basically formed to represent a number of countries, particularly the permanent members of the Security Council. So, 'Aziz said, what prevents the representatives of these countries from directly participating in the inspection tasks, which are defined by the executive chairman, together with the Special Commission experts to directly examine the allegations on hiding documents and weapons and so that the fate of an entire people will not depend on a decision or act taken by one person or a small group of people working in the Special Commission office?

Tariq 'Aziz said: We have the right to be concerned about our national rights. We also have the right to know when this long issue, which has been going on for more than five years, will come to an end.

Tariq 'Aziz added: This is team number 150. The Security Council should define a clear framework and set a specific and reasonable timetable for the completion of the missions of the Special Commission. If the work of the Special Commission is left for the judgment of some people, then it could go on forever, in a desperate attempt by those concerned to achieve specific political purposes.

Tariq 'Aziz added: We still hope that the Security Council would respond positively to our constructive proposal. We have shown full cooperation with the Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency and we are ready to continue to cooperate in the future. I have invited Mr. Ekeus to visit Baghdad to conduct a joint in-depth and comprehensive assessment of the situation, define what has been achieved and what has not, and agree on a joint working plan to close all files in a professional and practical method and without any problems or standoffs.

Tariq 'Aziz ridiculed a statement Ekeus made yesterday that he was worried about the safety of the members of the inspection teams. 'Aziz said: M. Ekeus knows very well that we have never harassed any member of the inspection teams, men and women, experts and military.

INA learned that several American members of the current inspection team are in the military and that the female head of the inspection team who caused the standoff at the Ministry of Agriculture in 1992 was an officer in the U.S. Army holding the rank of major.

Iraq: 'Aziz Sees Coordination Between Ekeus, U.S.

JN1406101996 Baghdad INA in Arabic
0950 GMT 14 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 14 Jun (INA)— Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz said that the two other sites which the UN Special Commission chairman

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yesterday said should be inspected, are also Republican Guard facilities.

In a statement to INA today, 'Aziz said: It is interesting to note that the UN Special Commission chairman insists on inspecting facilities that relate to national security and not other sites, in which we usually allow inspections. This conduct is deliberate and aims to escalate the crisis in a fabricated manner.

Tariq 'Aziz said: Each time the UN Special Commission chairman provides excuses for the fabricated escalation, the United States and Britain have a draft statement or resolution ready in the UN Security Council. This shows that there is a full coordination between the UN Special Commission chairman and the United States and Britain.

The deputy prime minister stressed Iraq's clear and fair position which was announced in previous statements. He said that Iraq urged the Security Council's permanent member states and presidency to directly participate in the inspections.

He added: This shows Iraq's sincere desire for maximum transparency in dealing with the Security Council. It also shows that Iraq wants the Security Council to become directly acquainted with realities and draw the true conclusion that there are no banned materials at the sites alleged by the UN Special Commission's chairman. Iraq also wants the Security Council not to leave the destiny of its people in the hands of one person, namely, the UN Special Commission's chairman.

Tariq 'Aziz said: We demand that the entire international community, particularly the Security Council, take an objective and firm position against the attempts by the United States and Britain and those implementing their schemes to fabricate crises and distract the international community from the definite reality; namely, that Iraq is not hiding any banned materials, contrary to the allegations of the UN Special Commission's chairman, and that Iraq substantively fulfilled its commitments regarding the weapons file. This calls for serious consideration, without delay, of lifting the unjust blockade imposed on Iraq, led by the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687.

Iraq: Envoy—Ekeus Awaited; No Comment on Inspection Link

MM1406100296 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Jun 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by Khalil Matar: "Western Diplomat Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Military Strike Against Iraq on the Cards Because of Inspection Crisis"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] New York — The tension between Baghdad and the UN inspection teams is continuing despite the Security Council resolution urging the Iraqi Government to allow the inspection teams to enter the two sites they want to inspect and considering Iraq's refusal a violation of Resolution 687. International sources have said that Washington is considering the option of using force if Baghdad's refusal continues.

Ambassador Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's representative to the United Nations has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: "We are waiting for Rolf Ekeus, head of the Special Commission, to set a date for his visit to Baghdad following an invitation we sent to him before the recent problem started, in order to tackle all the outstanding questions." Hamdun declined to say whether Baghdad will allow the inspection teams to enter the two sites before Ekeus' visit, or whether the entire issue is linked to the visit. He just said: "Our invitation to Ekeus still stands, and we are trying to secure a suitable formula to solve the problem in a manner that safeguards Iraqi national sovereignty and Iraq's cooperation with the United Nations."

Meanwhile, a Western diplomat has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Washington is considering the measures it should take, in consultation with Britain and France to some extent, in the light of Baghdad's refusal to allow the inspection teams to enter the two sites belonging to the Republican Guard and its persistence in issuing statements defying the international community.

The diplomat in question said that a military strike against Baghdad is on the cards if this Iraqi refusal continues. Because the Security Council considered this refusal a violation of Resolution 687, that is, a violation of the cease-fire agreement. And Baghdad's refusal to comply means that the coalition has the power to launch a military strike to impose implementation. [passage omitted]

Iraq: Ekeus 'in Constant Contact' With Iraqi Officials

MM1406102496 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 Jun 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Raghidah Dirgham: "Baghdad Refusing To Comply With Security Council Resolution"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] New York, Paris, AL-HAYAH — The confrontation between Iraq and the UN Special Commission, headed by Rolf Ekeus, is witnessing a major escalation for the third day. Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz has announced that Iraq will not comply with the Security Council resolution demanding that the UN inspection teams be allowed to enter any site identified by the commission entrusted with dismantling mass-destruction weapons. [passage omitted]

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Ekeus told AL-HAYAH that the commission has issued instructions to inspection experts in Baghdad to enter "two new sites," in addition to a site belonging to the Republican Guard which the inspection teams tried to enter before the Security Council adopted its resolution.

Ekeus stated that Iraq also "prevented" the inspection teams from entering the two sites "after the council adopted its resolution." He revealed that one of the two sites was "partially inspected" by the inspection teams last March. It belongs to the special units of the Iraqi Republican Guard.

The other site is "sensitive," according to Iraqi authorities. Ekeus declined to precisely specify the location of the two sites. He just said that they are in "the Baghdad area."

On the Abu Gharib site, Ekeus said that the commission decided to "abandon" it 11 hours after trying to enter it. He added that the commission decided to abandon the site "because we could not cover it" due to its huge area. He went on to say that the inspection teams "will try to return to this site at a later stage."

He stressed that he "is in constant contact" with Iraqi officials in a bid to resolve the crisis. Commenting on the Iraqi press' accusation against him of being an agent for the United States and Britain, he said: "We reject such statements." He went on: "I am acting within the framework of the task assigned to me and the Security Council resolutions. We are not implementing any party's agenda."

He added that he will visit Baghdad in 10 days, saying that he could go earlier but, "on principle," he prefers not to go to Baghdad on a mission limited to resolving this crisis.

Ekeus stated that he had informed the Security Council members of the potential consequences of the Iraqi Government's adoption of stands obstructing the inspection teams' tasks, pointing to the consequences of the "delay" in achieving progress toward the implementation of Clause 22 of Resolution 687, which links the lifting of the oil blockade imposed on Iraq to its full compliance with all the Special Commission's demands. He said that these stands "seriously obstruct the commission's work. He denied any link between the timing of the inspection teams' mission and the identification of the sites, and the implementation of Resolution 986, which allowed Baghdad to sell a quantity of oil to meet the Iraqis' humanitarian needs.

The Security Council presidency is making efforts to contain the crisis and prevent a confrontation. Sources close to the council presidency say that Egypt is making contacts with Iraq through the council presidency and other channels to urge Baghdad not to escalate the situation. [passage omitted]

Iraq: Oil Minister Says Contracts for French Companies Prepared

JN1306204996 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 11 Jun 96 pp 1, 30

[Report by Sayyid Hamdi in Paris]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi Oil Minister 'Amir Rashid said his country has prepared contracts for the exploitation of the Majnun and Nahr 'Umar oil fields by the French companies Total and Elf.

In a statement to AL-ITTIHAD, Rashid said that the French side is studying the issue, and that the signing of contracts will take place at the appropriate time, which he said, would take several weeks in view of the pending issues, and that it is now up to the French side.

'Amir Rashid added that his country's return to the international oil market will not have a negative impact on prices even when Iraqi exports reach 2.5 million barrels a day.

The Iraqi minister said his country recently adopted a responsible position at the latest OPEC meeting, as did the other OPEC member states.

He emphasized that the market is capable of absorbing the Iraqi production even if it reaches the peak of its exporting capacity within six months when output could reach 2.5 million barrels a day. He said the increase in the international demand for oil, in addition to the coordination of positions among OPEC states, will allow the oil to be absorbed onto the markets without creating any price shocks.

Rashid said Iraq now has the capability to export 2 million barrels a day, but is bound by the quantity set by the Security Council, which is 800,000 barrels a day. He said he hoped the quantity allowed to be exported would be increased to 1.5 million barrels a day during the periodic review of the Iraqi needs after three months. He added that after six months, when the matter is settled with the Special Commission and Rolf Ekeus, Iraq will be able to export 2.5 million barrels a day.

Iraq: Government—Trains, Trucks Ready To Transport Goods

JN1306122796 Baghdad INA in English 1030 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Jun 13, INA—General Institution of Railways has prepared a large number of trains and trucks to take part in the process

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of transferring food stuff, medicine, and other humanitarian needs expected to arrive in accordance to the deal between Iraq and the UN.

During a press conference, Director General of the Institution Dr. Yusuf 'Abd-al-Wahid has declared the Institution has prepared all the facilities to transfer (6,000-8,000) tons daily of the above mentioned materials from Umm Qasr and Khawr al-Zubayr ports to the various provinces.

The Institution has carried out a wide and intensive campaign to repair and maintain 53 out of work trains and 1,000 goods trucks to enhance its fleets in transferring materials due to arrive to the country through our ports, he added.

He pointed out the 3-week campaign included the maintenance of the railways and rebuilding al-Sumud station in Umm Qasr which had been damaged during the 30-states aggression to connect it with the ten docks of Umm Qasr.

Iraq: Opposition Denies Contact With Regime; Reshuffle Expected

MM1306150096 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Jun 96 p 6

[Unattributed report: "Iraqi Opposition Denies Any Contact With Baghdad"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Informed Iraqi sources in the Jordanian capital Amman have said that Iraqi President Saddam Husayn is in the process of making changes in his cabinet, while Iraqi opposition sources in Amman have denied that an Iraqi Government envoy held meetings with opposition elements to persuade them to participate in a new government based on a coalition between the ruling Ba'th Party and the Iraqi opposition factions abroad.

There have recently been rumors in the Jordanian capital to the effect that Makram Talabani, a former Iraqi Kurdish minister and a nationalist Kurdish figure residing in Baghdad, contacted the two Kurdish leaders Jalal Talabani and Mas'ud Barzani and other leaders representing some of the Iraqi opposition parties and movements abroad to persuade them to cooperate with the ruling Ba'th Party in Iraq with a view to forming a new Iraqi government led by the ruling party and in which Iraqi opposition factions would participate. The sources have stressed that no such contacts took place.

The sources added that the opposition factions "did not and will not meet with (President) Saddam Husayn's regime, since it is no longer possible to trust his promises. Such a step — if it took place — would help to rescue the regime from collapse. Most of the Iraqi national opposition factions have stressed that they have not met with any of the current regime's symbols."

Meanwhile, the informed Iraqi sources in Amman expect President Saddam Husayn to make a partial cabinet reshuffle which will affect nonessential ministerial portfolios such as the Transport and Communications Ministry, the Higher Education and Scientific Research Ministry, the Finance Ministry, and the Education Ministry, keeping the Defense Ministry under the direct supervision of his eldest son, 'Udayy. The informed Iraqi sources stress that this reshuffle is designed merely to replace some old faces with new ones.

Iraq: Jordanian Popular Delegation Arrives To Voice Support

JN1306190896 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1715 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 13 Jun (INA)— A Jordanian popular delegation, comprising political, parliamentary, and unionist figures arrived in Baghdad today on a visit of several days. Taysir al-Himsi, secretary of the Higher Command of the Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, said in a statement to INA that the delegation's visit to Iraq is an expression of the Jordanian people's and national forces' support for Iraq and its courageous leadership in confronting the aggression and the unjust blockade imposed on them.

Al-Himsi added that the popular delegation's visit comes at this time in particular to underscore the strong fraternal and decisive relations between the two sisterly countries. The visit, he said, aims at pooling popular potentials in the arena of pan-Arab action to face the challenges to which the Arab nation is exposed.

Taysir al-Himsi added that Iraq is the basis of Arab action and the guarantee for the nation and its steadfastness in confronting the challenges targeting its presence, future, and pan-Arab plan.

The delegation comprises representatives of 16 Jordanian parties, representatives of trade unions and mass organizations, a number of political, intellectual, media, and press figures, as well as the popular committees for supporting Iraq in the Jordanian governorates.

Iraq: Paper Views Country's Dealing With International Resolutions

JN1406130596 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0850 GMT 14 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 14 Jun (INA)— The newspaper AL-THAWRAH asserts that Iraq is always eager to commit itself to the implementation

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of international resolutions in a way that enhances cooperation with the United Nations as a prelude to ending the economic blockade.

In an editorial today, the paper, which speaks on behalf of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says: Iraq is more eager than others to work positively to foil the plans of those who fish in troubled waters and who wish to continue the blockade.

AL-THAWRAH adds: It is now clear that the recent provocations created by the inspection teams, which Iraq openly rejected, are part of a hostile policy to perpetuate the blockade and create feeble pretexts to prevent the Security Council from fulfilling its commitments toward Iraq in accordance with Paragraph 22 of Security Council Resolution 687. This resolution recognizes Iraq's right to unconditionally sell its oil in order to reconstruct its capabilities in various fields following difficult years of an unjust economic blockade which impeded Iraq's natural tendencies toward achieving happiness and prosperity for its people.

The paper adds: The provocations created by the inspection team two days ago — which resulted from the team's attempt to enter sites linked to Iraq's sovereignty and national security — were rejected not because they represent a right granted by the international resolutions to the inspectors to carry out a certain mission within the framework of respecting the national sovereignty of Iraqi institutions, but because they encroach upon Iraq's right to safeguard its security and sovereignty.

AL-THAWRAH says: Safeguarding the security and sovereignty of countries is a right respected by all states, including the UN member states which are led by the Security Council's permanent member states. The various states in the world refuse to relinquish this right. This is because the UN Charter was based on respecting the sovereignty of states and peoples' rights and on rejecting encroachment on their national peculiarities and undermining the constants of national sovereignty and security.

The paper says that emphasizing Iraq's legitimate right—by requesting the Security Council, through its permanent member states and its current presidency, to intervene in order to supervise and attend the inspections ordered by Ekeus—is in harmony with the principles and objectives of the international resolutions in a way that equally understands and implements Resolution 687. This resolution first called for Iraq's cooperation with the UN Special Commission by destroying its banned weapons. This has been stressed in the Iraqi positions throughout five years.

AL-THAWRAH adds: At the same time, Resolution 687 calls on the Security Council to fulfill its commitments toward Iraq. However, the Special Commission continues to allege that Iraq is hiding banned documents and materials to justify the indefinite continuation of the blockade, which flagrantly violates the spirit and letter of this resolution.

Concluding, the paper says: Iraq's concern over the provocative inspection requests which are pursued against its distinctive national institutions with the aim of harming its sovereignty and security is due to the fact that this exposed policy has no restrictions. This policy will continue as such unless the Security Council, which is the decisionmaker in this regard, intervenes and directly acquaints itself with the realities and with the great efforts the Iraqi side has made to facilitate the inspection missions in the past five years, so the Security Council can be briefed on the measures taken in implementation of the international resolutions.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Iraq's concern is legitimate, and it should be heard well, and its realities should be realized. However, some UN parties uttered falsehoods designed to harm the Iraqi position by implying that the Iraqis were hiding something from the United Nations.

The paper points out that the Special Commission's chairman is well aware that during all inspections thus far made, his inspectors did not find anything to confirm their doubts. Realities proved that their doubts were never based on evidence or truth after Iraq refuted all their allegations by complying with the international resolutions so accurately that the sick-minded parties were embarrassed. These parties always wagered on the fabrication of pretexts in order to defer the international efforts designed to totally lift the blockade imposed on the Iraqi people, the paper adds.

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Israel: Netanyahu's 'First' Statement on Peace, Security Reported

TA1306163696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1505 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu says that security is the supreme test of any peace arrangement. No threats will deter the State of Israel; on the contrary, they will have the opposite effect. The prime minister-elect made these remarks during a visit with the Dassbergs, who lost their daughter in the most recent terrorist attack. Yo'el Nir reports:

[Begin recording] [Nir] This was prime minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu's first visit to a settlement in the territories, and it took place under sad circumstances. When Menahem Begin visited the settlement of Aloney More after winning the elections, he said: There will be many more Aloney Mores. Binyamin Netanyahu did not say it, but he implied as much. He also reacted to the threats of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and others to renew the intifadah and the terror attacks. Here is what he said:

[Netanyahu] For the very reason that we experience such tragedies, security is the supreme test of any agreement we will make or have made. There will be no compromise on this issue. Furthermore, we are not impressed by the various declarations and threats against the State of Israel. They will have the opposite effect. We will insist on their honoring the security terms, because we strive for peace with security. Genuine peace to which we aspire means peace with security, first and foremost. That will be our goal.

[Nir] This was Netanyahu's first public statement on peace and security since the elections.

The bereaved mother, Yehudit Dassberg, told Netanyahu: I have joined the large family of bereavement, but I would like also to join the three families whose loss of their loved ones was followed by the Government of Israel's decision to es?ablish a new settlement — Neve Daniyel in the 'Etzyon Bloc. This is one answer the Arabs understand best, the bereaved mother said. The prime minister-elect replied: I understand how you feel. When the new government is established, an appropriate answer will be given, and your loved ones will be commemorated. [end recording]

Israel: Netanyahu Vows To Present Cabinet 17 Jun; Coalition Moves

TA1306185496

[FBIS Report] Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1600 GMT on 13 June reports: "The prime minister-elect has told several figures with whom he conferred today that he will present his government to the Knesset on 17 June, as planned. Netanyahu will convene the ministers-to-be on 16 June to inform them of the portfolios they are to be assigned."

The report adds: "The leaders of Yisra'el Ba'aliya this afternoon decided to reject the offer made to Sharansky by Binyamin Netanyahu — an industry and trade portfolio plus two deputy ministers in the Immigrant Absorption and Education Ministries. Sharansky said he had meant to bring about a revolution and to execute ideas in social spheres. If we are unable to carry out these ideas, we will not join the government, he said."

Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 1400 GMT on 13 June reports: "Avigdor Qahalani said that there was a good chance The Third Way with its four seats would join the coalition. After his meeting with Netanyahu, he said the government's basic guidelines would include a clause on keeping the Golan Heights under Israeli sovereignty." In a recorded passage, Qahalani says: "We are talking about the security border on the Golan Heights and taking care of the villages and kibbutzim on the Golan Heights. We are not talking about not moving a meter. We can find a solution, but we are going to stay forever on the Golan Heights." Asked by correspondent Amy Rhodes whether he meant "on the Golan Heights or in the Golan Heights," Qahalani replies: "To stay on the Golan Heights." Referring to the "religious status quo issue," he says: "We will find a way that will allow us to vote in our way about religious problems."

The report adds: "Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan told reporters that his meeting with the prime minister-elect was productive, but refused to add details. He was noncommittal when asked whether the public security portfolio would be reserved for him pending the outcome of a police investigation into alleged security breaches."

The report further states: "Likud Knesset Member Moshe Qatzav has told Prime Minister-elect Netanyahu that if reports are correct that he is to be appointed health minister, he would prefer not to be a minister at all. In response, Netanyahu is said to have made clear to Qatzav that no one within the Likud has been promised anything yet. But Netanyahu did say that he wants Qatzav as a minister."

Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 13 June reports: "Police believe that two more weeks will be needed to complete the Refa'el Eytan file investigation, rather than one week, as Eytan was informed by the attorney general."

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Following the report, anchor Hayim Yavin interviews Doron Shmu'eli, whom Yavin introduces as Eytan's "close aide and friend." Yavin asks: "Refa'el Eytan's status in the new government is somewhat unclear. He is to be a senior minister on the one hand, but there is also the attorney general's legal opinion. Can you enlighten us on what will happen with him next week?" Shmu'eli replies: "Refa'el Eytan's status does not hinge on the portfolio he is assigned. He will be deputy prime minister, equal in standing with David Levi and next to Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu." Shmu'eli then proceeds to explain that a "minister's standing does not necessarily correspond with his portfolio" and concludes: "Eytan's standing will correspond with his personality. In this cabinet, he will be the figure with the most outstanding defense record." Asked whether Eytan is still a candidate for the Defense or Public Security Ministries, Shmu'eli replies that "as soon as the investigation into his case is completed, Eytan will be eligible for any position he is assigned."

Israel: Jordanian Envoy Sets Up Lobby With Arab MK's

TA1306150696 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An initiative to set up an Arab lobby made up of the envoys of the six Arab countries represented in Israel and the newly elected 11 Arab Knesset members [MK] was presented this morning to MK 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah. The aim is to set up an Arab consultative forum which would promote the political process. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports:

[Segal] The initiative to set up an Arab consultative forum came from Jordanian Ambassador 'Umar al-Rifa'i. After calling a meeting of all Arab representatives in Israel two days ago to discuss the results of the elections, the ambassador met this morning with MK Darawshah and proposed that he set up an Arab lobby made up of the envoys of the six Arab countries represented in Israel — Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Oman, and Mauritania — and the newly elected 11 Arab MK's.

The group is described as a peace lobby and is aimed at creating a consultative forum to promote the political process and to increase cooperation among all Arab elements, be they Israeli legislators or Arab diplomats. The nature of the new Arab lobby has not yet been decided, and it is not known what its functions will be, other than the consultations held this morning between the Egyptian and Jordanian ambassadors and MK Darawshah.

No reaction to the initiative has yet been obtained from the bureau of Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu.

Israel: MK Darawshah Comments on New Arab Lobby

TA1306170596 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 13 Jun 96

[Telephone interview with Israeli MK 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah, leader of the Arab Democratic Party, by correspondents Rafi Ginat and Mikhal Gazit; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ginat] Do you support the establishment of the new Arab lobby?

[Darawshah] I support the establishment of a lobby to promote the peace process. After all, our aspiration is to advance the peace process between the State of Israel and the entire Arab world, which is a noble aspiration.

[Ginat] Will the new forum of Arab ambassadors and diplomats and Arab Knesset members [MK] see to Israel's interests or to those of the Arab countries?

[Darawshah] First of all, you should know that we are talking about six Arab countries which maintain some sort of diplomatic relations with Israel and were the first to establish ties with Israel. The ambassadors are men of goodwill who want to promote the peace process together with us, the 11 Israeli Arab MK's.

[Gazit] The formation of a lobby made up of Israeli MK's and Arab ambassadors, who are after all envoys of foreign countries, could be interpreted as a kind of disloyalty to the State of Israel. Are you aware of this?

[Darawshah] It is not a permanent forum, but an initiative to hold consultative meetings to exchange views on how to promote the peace process, on how to influence the Arab world on the one hand and the Israeli Government on the other.

[Ginat] Sir, do you believe an ambassador who officially represents his country will act as you want him to? Couldn't it be that he thinks you will serve his interests?

[Darawshah] The ambassador serves his country, but you should know that his country wants to advance the peace process and maintains peace relations with Israel. He is not the ambassador of a country hostile to Israel, but the envoy of a country that is trying to persuade other Arab countries to join....

[Ginat, interrupting] He is still the ambassador of a foreign country.

[Darawshah] Right, but this is a foreign country that maintains friendly relations with Israel.

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[Gazit] Next week Egypt will hold a very large conference of Arab countries aimed at pressuring the Netanyahu government, and you are linking up with the Egyptian interest in this respect.

[Darawshah] You are wrong. I met the Egyptian ambassador today, and he explicitly told me that the purpose of the conference in Cairo is to find new paths to promote the peace process, not to threaten or to pressure the Israeli Government, but to try to find new ways to advance the peace process. What's wrong with that?

[Ginat] If you are looking for new paths, how come the forum does not include Jewish MK's and politicians?

[Darawshah] Well, I believe there are things that link us, the Arab population of Israel, with the Arab ambassadors who represent countries that maintain peace ties with Israel. Those links are stronger than those with Jewish MK's, and this is only natural.

[Gazit] Do you hope to mediate between the Arab countries and the Netanyahu government?

[Darawshah] I don't think mediation is on the agenda at the moment, but I suppose we want to influence both sides in order to enable the promotion of the peace process and the resumption of the negotiations. This serves the interests of Israel, the Arab world, and all of us.

[Ginat] And you don't agree that the lobby is actually enlisting Israeli parliamentarians to help forward the interests of the Arab countries in Israel.

[Darawshah] The Arab ambassadors are not enlisting anybody in order to serve the interests of the Arab countries at Israel's expense. What we have here is the goodwill of Arab ambassadors who represent countries that have diplomatic ties with Israel, together with Arab MK's who are loyal to the State of Israel. I think all of us share the interest of peace.

Israel: New IDF Appointments Announced

TA1406083696 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 14 Jun 96 p A5

[Report by Eytan Rabin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Brigadier General Gabi Ashkenazi was promoted to general and entered his new job as deputy head of the Operations Branch in a ceremony held yesterday in the chief of staff's office. He replaces Major General Eytan Ben-Eliyahu, who will be appointed commander of the Air Force in July.

Gen. Ashkenazi served in a long series of jobs in the Golani Brigade and was the chief of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] liaison unit with Lebanon. His latest job was head of the General Staff's Operations Department. He is a graduate of the Tel Aviv Military School, the IDF's Staff and Command College, and the U.S. Naval War College. [passage omitted]

Brig. Gen. Giyora 'Inbar, who was chief of the IDF's liaison unit with Lebanon, ended his assignment. Brig. Gen. Eli 'Amitay was appointed his replacement yesterday in a ceremony held in Metulla. 'Amitay's latest job was commander of the Nahal Brigade.

Israel: Protest at U.S. Consulate; Letter Passed for Clinton, Indyk

TA1306134696 (Internet) Women in Green Information Service in English 11 Jun 96

["Media Release" by Ruth and Nadia Matar: "Israel Is Not a Banana Republic, Mr. Clinton!"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The recent democratic election results in Israel, revealed a clear Jewish majority interested in security and Jewish survival against an all pervasive Arab threat that seeks Israel's destruction, despite the Oslo Accords. Accordingly, the Jewish electorate of this Jewish State rejected the Peres Government's policies, and removed it from office, and reaffirmed its belief in the Bible and its Zionist philosophy.

Notwithstanding this clear evidence of a democratic choice by the Jewish People, the message conveyed by the American Ambassador to Israel, Martin Indyk following the election results, was that America sought compliance by the new Government of Israel concerning redeployment of the Israel Defense Forces in Hebron, as unilaterally promised by the former rejected leadership of Shim'on Peres. Such redeployment was in the interest of Mr. Clinton, who was backing the policies of Shim'on Peres to the hilt, and who similarly bound himself and America to such course of action. However, the Jewish People, recognizing the nature of the continued unabated hostility of the Arabs, and particularly the Arabs of Hebron, rejected turning over to Arab control the ancient Jewish holy city of Hebron. They wisely recognized, among other reasons, that by creating another safe haven for Arab murderers, such redeployment would encourage terror, not reduce it.

On Monday, June 10, 1996, the Women In Green led a Protest outside the American Consulate on Agron Street in Jerusalem, against American interference in Israel's right to protect itself from its enemies. ISRAEL IS NOT A BANANA REPUBLIC, MR. CLINTON. A letter addressed to President Clinton with a copy to Mr. Indyk, was handed over to the head of the American Consulate at the end of the demonstration, together with a basket full of bananas grown in Israel.

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Israel: Poll Views Stands on Hebron, Lebanon Pullout, Labor Leader

TA1406100796 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 14 Jun 96

["Public opinion poll commissioned by YEDI'OT AHARONOT and carried out by the Dahaf Institute under the management of Dr. Mina Tzemah"; all answers given in percentage points]

[FBIS Translated Text] Question: Should the new government, once installed, complete the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in Hebron in compliance with its predecessor's commitment?

Answers: It should — 57; should not — 38; did not answer — 5 percent.

Question: Should the IDF be pulled out of south Lebanon?

Answers: It should be — 36; should not be — 57; did not answer — 7.

The following question was presented to a representative sample of individuals who voted for Labor in the last elections:

Question: Who do you think is most suited to head Labor today? (The interviewees were not given a list of candidates, and they replied without any guidance.)

Answers: Shim'on Peres — 61; Ehud Baraq — 16; Hayim Ramon — 11; 'Uzi Bar'am — 5; others — 2; did not answer — 5.

The poll was conducted on 12 June. The findings are based on two partially overlapping surveys: of 500 interviewees who constituted a representative sample of the adult Israeli population; and of 413 interviewees who were a representative sample of individuals who voted for Labor in the last elections. Maximum margin for error is 4 percent.

Israel: NEQUDA Press Review for Apr

TA0306094896

[FBIS Report] The following is a review of the April 1996 issue of NEQUDA, the monthly Hebrew-language magazine published by the Society for the Advancement of Settlement and Absorption in Judaea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip, and the Jordan Valley, which serves as the political organ of the Jewish settlers in the territories. These reports include summaries of all articles, reports, interviews, commentaries, adn other items with a bearing on political affairs published in NEQUDA.

CONTENTS:

1. Opening Page
2. From the News Section
3. The Wailing Wall
4. The Army Is Guilty Too

OPENING PAGE

This 400-word column, appearing on page 3 and signed by Hagay Huberman, is entitled "Make-Believe." Discussing the recent vote by the Palestinian National Council [PNC] on its covenant clauses that call for the destruction of Israel, Huberman says that in a play of make-believe, 'Arafat did not really ask the PNC to vote against them, leaving the entire matter unclear. He states that in fact, It is Peres who is fooling the nation with this story.

FROM THE NEWS SECTION

1. A Peace Watch survey showing the number of terror victims since the signing of the Oslo Accords higher than in the preceding decade. (rehash)

THE WAILING WALL

A 2,000-word article by Yo'el Elitzur on pages 20, 21, 22, describing Elitzur's correspondence with the Jerusalem municipality regarding the names given to the Wailing Wall on road signs in the city.

THE ARMY IS GUILTY TOO

A 2,000-word article by 'Adi'el Mintz on pages 32, 33, 34 asserting that, in fighting terrorism, the Army is hiding behind the excuse that the only possible solution is political and avoids preparing contingency plans, which is why it too is guilty for the surge in terror. The article recommends that the settlers join the Army's Regional Defense units to protect their own residence.

Israel: NEQUDA Press Review for May

TA0506102096

[FBIS Report] The following is a review of the May 1996 issue of NEQUDA, the monthly Hebrew-language magazine published by the Society for the Advancement of Settlement and Absorption in Judaea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip, and the Jordan Valley, which serves as the political organ of the Jewish settlers in the territories. These reports include summaries of all articles, reports, interviews, commentaries, and other item with a bearing on political affairs published in NEQUDA.

CONTENTS:

1. Opening Page
2. From the News Section
3. To Pull Strongly to the Right
4. The Settlements Will Defeat Oslo

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OPENING PAGE

This 200-word column on page 7, signed by editor in chief Uri Elitzur, is entitled "The Tie Will Win." Noting that the messages of the election campaign were blurred in order to win over the swing votes, Elitzur says that "as long as the national tie remains in effect, victory in the elections will not put an unequivocal end to the great argument about peace and Eretz Yisra'el."

FROM THE NEWS SECTION

1. Contrary to Peres' announcement, 'Arafat did not denounce the terrorist attack near Bet El.

2. The Labor government invested more in Judaea and Samaria than the Likud government.

3. Israel gave up its demand that the Jordan River be Israel's security border in the permanent arrangement talks.

4. U.S. Congress, Likud's Beni Begin claim Palestinian Charter has not been amended.

TO PULL STRONGLY TO THE RIGHT

This 2,000-word article on pages 30 and 31 is by Itay Elitzur, who takes issue with Hagay Huberman's assertion in the March 1996 edition that the situation created in the wake of the Oslo agreements cannot be reversed and that the main effort should be to maintain it. "If we reconcile ourselves to this situation, as Huberman suggests, the left will use it for its own needs and will continue to tighten the noose," Elitzur writes. He affirms that "the situation in Eretz Yisra'el is forever changeable. Our adherence to this land in recent generations was based on and proved this premise. Only those who fight for the land will win it. Those who opt for doing nothing and keeping what they have will ultimately lose what they have."

THE SETTLEMENTS WILL DEFEAT OSLO

This 2,000-word article on pages 32 and 33 is by Moshe Merhavya, who argues that the Oslo agreements do not preclude the construction of 100,000 new housing units. This would increase the population in Judaea and Samaria to 500,000, thus creating a strong Jewish presence which would carry "a decisive political weight with any government." Noting that Area C has potential for 2 million settlers, the author notes that the implementation of such a plan is largely up to the settlers. "A political-settlement 'window of opportunities' may open soon. When and how wide this window will open is not known. If we prepare accordingly and act properly we stand to gain," the article concludes.

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Jordan: 'People's Delegation' To Visit Iraq, Express Support

MM1306153196 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Jun 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Jordanian Delegation Heads for Baghdad To Express Support]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — A large Jordanian people's delegation comprising some 70 figures representing political parties, the House of Representatives, professional and labor unions, the women's sector, independent political figures, and former officials will leave Amman for Baghdad today to express the Jordanian people's support of the Iraqi people in their plight and suffering under the blockade.

This is the first visit of its kind since Jordanian-Iraqi relations began to deteriorate some months ago.

The delegation will meet during the week-long visit with senior officials and public, party, and unionist figures in Iraq to declare the Jordanian people's solidarity with the Iraqi people, to work to alleviate their suffering by various means, and to stress that the anti-Iraqi statements of Jordanian officials do not represent the Jordanian people or reflect their views or stands supportive of Iraq.

Sources in the Jordanian delegation have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that contacts were made between the organizers of the visit and Iraqi authorities over a month ago and before Iraq reached an agreement with the United Nations on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 986 or the so-called oil-for-food formula. [passage omitted]

Jordan: Delegation to Iraq 'Does Not Represent the Government's View'

MM1406104196 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 Jun 96 p 4

[Report by Salamah Ni'mat: "Amman: No Change in Our Position Toward Iraqi Regime"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman — An official Jordanian source has said that the Jordanian people's delegation comprising oppositionist political and union figures, which began a visit to Baghdad yesterday, does not represent the government's view.

The source told AL-HAYAH that the visit to Baghdad by the delegation, which includes 85 union and party figures, "is aimed at expressing the Jordanian people's sympathy with the suffering Iraqi people, and it does not reflect a change in the Jordanian Government's position toward the Iraqi regime."

The source stressed that the delegation "is not carrying any political message to Iraqi officials from the Jordanian Government." The source said that "unionists and party officials are entitled to make such a visit as long as they do not speak in the government's name or claim to be representing its view at the political level." [passage omitted]

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Lebanon: Buwayz Confers With Hizballah Delegation

NC1306114796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz today received a delegation of the Hizballah leadership led by Deputies Muhammad Barjawi and Muhammad Funaysh. Funaysh said the discussions dealt with developments in Lebanon and Israel's repeated violations of the April Understanding. He noted that Minister Buwayz briefed him on diplomatic efforts to address these issues and that memorandums on the Israeli violations were submitted to the United Nations.

Lebanon: 'Powerful' Blast in South Causes No Casualties, Damage

TA1306132796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A powerful bomb exploded in the heart of the township of Hula in the eastern sector of south Lebanon. No one was hurt, and no damage was caused.

IDF [Israel Defense Forces] sources told our correspondent Ilan Ro'e that Hizballah was again seeking to cause carnage inside a civilian location, violating the agreement of understandings.

Our correspondent notes that no IDF troops were moving in the area during the event.

Lebanon: Hizballah Claims Responsibility for Explosion

NC1306135996 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1330 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Terrorists once again violated the April understanding today. At around 1330 [1030 GMT], they detonated an explosive device near Hula, but caused no casualties.

The terrorist Hizballah organization claimed responsibility for this attack.

Lebanon: Israeli Attacks Continue; Hizballah Fighter Killed

NC1406074496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 14 June 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli attacks, including artillery shelling, warplanes overflights, and intermittent blockade of the southern coast, continue against the south. The enemy forces bombarded several areas in the south, the western sector, and Iqlim al-Tuffah over the past few hours. The resistance fighters retaliated by detonating an explosive charge in a car belonging to an agent of the occupation army [South Lebanese Army] on the Hula-Mays al-Jabal road.

The occupation army yesterday set fires in the forests and farms in the occupied town of al-Qantarah, particularly in the olive groves, which were all burned. The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY said that the enemy positions adjacent to the liberated villages were the scene of mechanized force concentrations, and that the enemy forces had reinforced their positions with several vehicles and erected some earth barriers. Furthermore, the enemy forces raided the towns of Dibbin and Balat in the occupied strip and kidnapped 'Ali Ramadan from Balat and Ahmad Wansah from Dibbin and took them to the al-Khiyam detention camp. The enemy forces and the militias increased their patrols and roadblocks inside the towns of the occupied strip, particularly in al-Khiyam and the road linking it to Marj 'Uyun.

On the other hand, 37 citizens yesterday visited al-Khiyam detention camp and met 12 detainees.

[Paris AFP in English at 0723 GMT on 14 June in a related Mashgharah-datelined item adds the following: "A Moslem fundamentalist Hizballah fighter was killed Friday [14 June] after an attack on Israeli forces in south Lebanon, the Iranian-backed group said. A Hizballah spokesman in the southern town of Mashgharah said the guerrilla was killed by shrapnel from Israeli shelling as he fled after an attack on an Israeli post at Taw'amat Niha inside Israel's self-declared 'security zone.' Guerrillas attacked the post with anti-tank rockets, mortars and light arms, leaving several casualties among Israeli soldiers and their allied South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia, Hizballah said. But the SLA denied any casualties in the attack."]

Lebanon: Iranian 'Excesses' Assailed; Control Over Hizballah Urged

NC1306181996

[FBIS Report] Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic on 10 June publishes two articles by Chief Editor Hasan Sabra in which he calls on the government to put an end to Iran's "excesses" in Lebanon, and to be the only decisionmaker regarding anti-Israel "resistance" in the country.

In an 800-word article headlined "The Resistance Decision in Peace and War Is in the Hands of the State Alone" on page 3, Sabra calls on the Lebanese Government not to bargain or be lenient over its right to exclusively control and organize resistance in a way that serves the country's national interests. He says every activity in Lebanon, including that of the Islamic Resistance and its political party Hizballah, must have the Lebanese state alone as its term of reference.

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After praising Syria's role in and support for Lebanon, Sabra says: "When some sides tried to implicate or embroil Syria in unrestrained [guerrilla] operations with political objectives, that serve no Arab party. Syria contained the Zionist aggression that resulted from those operations. It protected the resistance and helped the Lebanese state emerge as the big winner, despite the losses which the aggression caused to the country's infrastructure."

He adds: "For such an embroilment not to be repeated — as the results will not be the same as the previous ones — the Lebanese state must have the confrontation decision, in war and peace, in its hands. Hizballah must not be given any chance to be excluded, under the excuse that it is resisting the enemy. This enemy is the enemy of the Arab nation, of which Lebanon and Syria constitute a basic part." He goes on: "This is an Arab land, and Lebanon and Syria are united in blood and destiny. The target is all Lebanon, — the homeland, the society, and the establishments — not a certain party or a certain case, no matter what extraordinary or unnatural size this party or case may take at some point in time." Sabra concludes: "Let the Lebanese state make its decision, let all groups of Lebanese people rally around the state, and let the state's slogan of 'we are all for the homeland' be put into practice."

In another 1,500-word article on pages 4-5, the AL-SHIRA' chief editor accuses Iran of acting in Lebanon as a state within a state, and he cites some incidents to prove his claim. He suggests that the Iranian Embassy was behind a recent assassination attempt against an Iranian opponent in Lebanon. He also refers to Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Khonsari's recent visit to Lebanon, saying the Iranian official spent 42 days in Lebanon "holding political and security meetings with Lebanese parties and movements, some of which are illegal and some which essentially oppose the existence of the Lebanese state and Lebanese entity." He says Khonsari "made statements and promised assistance, ignoring the fact that there is a state, with officials and establishments, in Lebanon. He gave advice and guidance that has nothing to do with the interests of Lebanon, its officials, or its establishments; and instigated against national unity."

AL-SHIRA' chief editor cites another "incident" to prove Iran's "violation of the country's sovereignty and independence." He says the German minister of state for security affairs arrived in Beirut on a secret mission and met with Hizballah officials as part of a German mediation between Iran and Hizballah on one side and Israel on the other, to hand over the bodies of two Israeli soldiers killed in Lebanon. The writer says the German official met with some Lebanese officials just to cover the real reason behind his visit, and he claims that the objective of the German mediation was to improve Iranian-German and Iranian-Israeli relations.

Hasan Sabra says the repeated Iranian "excesses" prompted Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi to complain with public and private media statements, but Iran did not care. He adds: "So al-Hirawi was forced to carry his complaint to Latakia [in Syria] and to raise the issue before Arab leader Hafiz al-Asad. Al-Hirawi heard from al-Asad reassuring words, expressing support for Lebanon's sovereignty and stressing that the [Iranian] violations, which aim only at weakening the Lebanese state and so ultimately serve Israel, should not take place." Sabra points out that the Iranian excesses were protested not only by al-Hirawi, but also by Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri.

Sabra concludes: "Now that Iran has publicly shown that it is pursuing a policy of weakening the Lebanese state so that Iran can establish a state within a state, starting with Hizballah's antigovernment policy and moving toward a direct Iranian role against the sovereignty of the Lebanese state, Lebanon has no option but to put an end to these excesses at all levels."

Lebanon: Fadlallah Criticizes U.S. Influence in Middle East

LD1306191596 Tehran IRNA in English 1847 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ba'labakk, June 13, IRNA — Prominent Lebanese alim, al-'Allameh Sayid Muhammad Huseyn Fadlallah, here on Thursday [13 June] called on the Islamic ummah including the Arab peoples to coordinate a firm and fitting stance against the policies of the illegal Zionist regime.

Speaking at a ceremony marking the start of construction work of the Imam Hasan (a.s.) mosque of Sarayn village in Ba'labakk, Fadlallah said global arrogance was plotting to pave the way for the total infiltration of the Zionist regime into the Middle East fabric and to take over the leadership of the Arab world.

He criticised the double standard policy of the U.S. and Western governments in their dealings with the Muslims and the Zionists, and said that in the views of of the U.S. Administration and President Bill Clinton Muslim means a terrorist.

Fadlallah added that in the American and Western culture, the Zionists are on the right whatever the circumstances, whereas the Arabs and other Muslims have no rights at all.

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Syria: 'High-Level Sources' Denounce Jordanian Approach

MM1306140396 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Jun 96 p 5

[Report by Ibrahim Humaydi in Damascus: "Syrian Official Asks AL-HAYAH: What Does Jordan Gain by Adopting Israel's Rhetoric?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In response to recent accusations by Jordanian officials following the Damascus tripartite summit call for an Arab summit, Syrian high-level sources have told AL-HAYAH that they are surprised to see Jordanian officials adopting "Israel's political rhetoric" in the region and positions "at odds" with Arab interests.

The Jordanian accusations focused on the following points: "The contacts being held with Bahrain, the UAE, and the Sultanate of Oman to exert pressure on Syria to clarify its position with regard to the alliance with Iran; and the reports of arrests in Jordan of terrorist groups coming from Syria and planning to strike against tourists and Jordanian officials"; in addition to remarks that "it would be foolish to think that the recent Hizballah operation is a nationalist resistance operation, when the Syrian and Lebanese Armies are behaving as spectators with regard to Israeli occupation"; that Hizballah's operations indicate that "Syria will go to the Cairo summit on 21 June with an olive branch in one hand and a gun in the other"; and the announcement that "for Damascus to continue sheltering terrorist organizations is at odds with its declared commitment to peace as a strategic option."

Commenting on these points, the high-level Syrian sources said that "these accusations were made not by the Israelis or the Americans but instead by Jordanian officials, at a time when there is talk about the need for Arab solidarity and when Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria are organizing the first Arab summit since the Gulf War under the heading of peace and security." The sources added: "Although it is surprising that these leaks should be made at this very time, it is even more so that they should come from Amman which, over the past decades, has done everything that was at odds with Arab interests, to the point that it has now adopted Israeli political rhetoric." The sources singled out the following points:

"The principality of eastern Jordan was one of the first to agree to partition the al-Sham region or "greater Syria" when the Ottoman sultanate was divided. King 'Abdallah told Golda Meir, on a secret visit to Amman on 12 May 1947, days before the declaration of the Hebrew state, that he would not try to prevent the establishment of the state and would not call for a holy jihad.

"Jordan opposed the Syrian-Egyptian union in 1958 and worked against it. Jordan interfered again in Syria's internal affairs by supporting the Muslim Brotherhood in the late seventies and early eighties — something that the Jordanians later admitted and for which they apologized.

"encouragement was given to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn by Jordanian officials to invade Kuwait and start the Gulf War, whose consequences are still being felt by the Arabs; comments were made about the Hashemite Kingdom, with the subject being raised again last August when Staff General Husayn Kamil defected to Amman, and hints were dropped of support for the partitioning of Iraq along religious-nationalist lines.

"Jordan waited for the PLO to sign the Oslo agreement in order to gain an Arab-Palestinian cover, especially in view of its ethnic situation, in order to abandon any coordination, turn against meetings of the front-line states, and ratify the Wadi 'Arabah agreement, on the pretext that the Palestinian track had been completed and that the Syrian track was about to be completed, despite being fully aware of Syrian officials' clear pledges not to ratify before Jordan did.

"Jordanian officials announced that relations and secret contacts with Israel were decades old. Jordanian officials had even repeatedly said that 'they were proud' of these relations. Documents show that former Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir told former Secretary of State James Baker that 'safeguarding the Hashemite throne is at the heart of Israeli national security.'

"Regardless of the contents of the Wadi 'Arabah agreement on water, land, and security, Jordan hastened to normalize economic, political, and tourist, relations with Israel, without waiting for the other tracks to be completed and while competing with the PLO over the Jerusalem issue.

"[Jordan] moved a very long way during the Sharm al-Shaykh conference, perhaps further than any foreign state, with regard to so-called 'Islamic terrorism,' offering whatever was needed to combat the Palestinian opposition's movements, expelling some of that opposition's leaders to other states, and imposing restrictions on the others.

"King Husayn visited Ankara following the announcement of the Turkish-Israeli military cooperation agreement and talked about Jordan's intention of joining it, with U.S. aircraft arriving in Jordan to conduct joint military maneuvers (not for the first time and as a follow-up to previous maneuvers).

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"The Israeli prime minister-elect's personal envoy was welcomed, and Netanyahu contacted King Husayn following the announcement of his election victory in his first contact with the outside world."

The Syrian circles believe that "the Jordanian side's insistence on accusing Syria before undertaking any step toward Israel or the [unspecified] other quarter with regard to the peace agreement or normalization reflects the Jordanian belief that Jordan was in fact part of "greater Syria" and that the cover should come from "what historically had been the elder sister" They added that "this does not justify the fact that the Jordanians are trying to do everything to cause concern for Syria with regard to the issues of peace, Iraq, and regional relations, whereby Amman has adopted positions at odds with Damascus, regardless of their nature, and which have always been in line with reaffirming the regionalism [qutriyah] that the Jordanians themselves have admitted."

The sources added: "If the tactical objective of all these leaks is to make relations with the Syrians revert to their normal state, the Jordanian officials know better than others that this complicates rather than simplifies matters, particularly in view of the fact that Syria believes that the recent Jordanian policy and leaks aim at harming the Syrian position and serve the other side." However, the sources stressed "our keenness on Arab solidarity because it is in everybody's interest."

The sources said that, although Syrian officials opposed the Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement, they were nonetheless committed to refraining from providing any financial support against it, and were particularly keen not to give visits made by the Jordanian opposition sides to Damascus any dimension with regard to interference in [Jordan's] internal affairs. They also took it upon themselves not respond to the Jordanian accusations, particularly at this time when all Arabs, including Jordanians, Syrians, Egyptians and others, need to coordinate efforts and reach positions which match the challenges.

Syria: Al-Shar' Receives Message From Russia's Primakov

JN1306165296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received a message from Yevgeniy Primakov, foreign minister of Russia, in its capacity as a cosponsor of the peace process in the region. Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk delivered the message during his meeting with al-Shar' today in the presence of Assistant Foreign Minister Raslan 'Allush and Russia's Ambassador in Damascus Viktor Gogitidze. The two sides discussed developments in the peace process, the situation in the region, as well as bilateral relations.

Syria: Radio—Likud May Go Back on Electoral Program

JN1306161996 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1137 GMT 13 Jun 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: No one can overlook this strong wave of activity and energy which began to flow in the veins of the Arab body, which were in danger of hardening, so to speak. At the end of last week, a tripartite summit was held between the leaders of Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt to announce to the world that the only way to achieve peace is through Israel's full withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, including the Golan, to the 4 June 1967 lines, and from southern lebanon and the occupied Palestinian territories, foremost of which is Arab Jerusalem. Moreover, this tripartite summit led to a call for an Arab summit during the last part of June to achieve reunion and restore Arab solidarity.

Between the Damascus tripartite summit and the upcoming Arab summit in Cairo, President Hafiz al-Asad met with the Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi. They discussed developments in the region and in the Arab arena, and their repercussions, as well as coordination between the two fraternal countries.

There is no need to stress here that the relationship between the two fraternal countries, Syria and Lebanon, has become in the eyes of the Arab public opinion a model for solidarity and coordination as it should be among Arab countries. Indeed, this coordination between Syria and Lebanon is a reminder of the coordination under whose banner the Arabs attended the Madrid conference — coordination which the Arabs are aspiring to restore and strengthen through the upcoming Arab summit in Cairo.

These Arab moves will allow the Arab citizen to describe the next stage of Arab life as a stage of mobilization; we refer here to President Hafiz al-Asad's famous expression that the signs of this new strength in the Arab stand can also be seen outside the Arab homeland. Damascus — which turned the grapes of Israeli barbarism last April into grapes of failure for Israel — was the center of international efforts aimed at bridling the Israeli aggression. Damascus established new points of strength for the Arabs in the European continent. The European Union stressed its commitment to the peace process according to the Madrid terms of reference and by playing its full political and economic

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role in support of the peace process alongside the cosponsors of the peace conference.

Within the framework of concern over the peace process, Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini, whose country is currently presiding over the European Union, said: The European Union and its member states view recent Israeli statements with great concern. This shows how much the European Union is concerned about the success and continuation of the peace process on the basis of the Madrid conference, because this is the only guarantee to achieve the objectives of the peace process vis-a-vis realizing stability in the region and ending the state of tension.

The European Union and international community are seeking to commit all parties to exchange land for peace, which is the essence of the peace process and the basis of the Madrid conference, until the aspired just peace is realized. This was stressed at the Damascus summit and is the essence of the upcoming Cairo summit. The Arabs are concerned about Israel's commitment to the Madrid terms of reference and international resolutions, which stipulate the return of occupied Arab territories to their owners and securing everyone's rights to security and sovereignty in accordance with international legitimacy resolutions. What concerns us is Israel's commitment to this — whether it is a Likud or a Labor government — and not what type of government. Will the new Israeli Government go back on its extremist and antipeace electoral program?

We will not close the door to anyone who wants to draw conclusions regarding differences between the electoral and governmental programs. At the same time, however, we cannot leave the Arab destiny and future of the occupied Arab territories hostage to the claws of Arab weakness and Israeli expansionist programs. Indeed, we will seek to further activate and energize the Arab situation through the Cairo summit and any possible Arab effort.

The upcoming Arab summit will not close the door to the peace process. Indeed, it is part of the comprehensive Arab effort to prevent those who despise peace from closing the door to the peace process, which is originally based on respect for resolutions of international legitimacy and the international community's desire to achieve a just and comprehensive peace that secures everyone's rights, security, and dignity.

Syria: Paper Says Israel Obstructed Peace Process

JN1406081596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 14 Jun 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its editorial today, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH discusses the peace process, asserting that from the time it agreed to attend the Madrid conference, Syria, along with the Arabs, announced that a just and comprehensive peace was a strategic option.

The paper adds: Syria's position on peace has always been characterized by seriousness, consistency, and eagerness to achieve peace in accordance with the bases of the Madrid conference. These bases are represented by implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy and the U.S. initiative, achieving total Israeli withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 lines, making equitable [al-mutakafi'ah] and balanced [al-mutawazinah] security arrangements on both sides of these lines, acknowledging the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, and implementing Security Council Resolution 425 on southern Lebanon.

AL-THAWRAH says that any review of the peace process since it started five years ago will show that the Arabs never closed the road to this process or obstructed it, so they cannot now be requested to keep the road to peace open. Such closure and obstruction were only caused by Israel, as attested by the whole world.

The paper believes that this strange call on the Arabs was made at a time when they began to unify their position on the recent developments, challenges, and possibilities imposed by the change that was made in the Israeli position that disavows the bases of peace.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Those who request the Arabs to keep the road open are well aware that Syria, along with all Arabs, was very eager to render the peace process a success and continue it in order to achieve its objective. Syria frequently said that peace is its strategic option. Israel, however, did not say that peace is its strategic option, nor did it state frankly that it was committed to peace.

The paper says that this position was recently emphasized at the Damascus tripartite summit whose final statement stressed that peace is a strategic option and that a unified Arab position should be taken vis-a-vis the challenges and possibilities that were created by the new Israeli position that fully conflicts with the bases of peace, especially since Israel is responsible for keeping the peace process at square one throughout the past five years.

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Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says: The Arabs cannot accept less than the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy and the U.S. land-for-peace principle. The Arabs agreed to achieve a just and comprehensive peace that meets all its requirements in terms of achieving full Israeli withdrawal and returning rights to their legitimate owners.

Syria: Paper—No 'Single Positive Sign' of Peace From Israel

JN1406105396 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 14 Jun 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a commentary, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says that despite the calls by some to wait, and despite their belief that it is premature to judge Binyamin Netanyahu, who won the recent Israeli elections, before he forms his government and before knowing the true positions and policies he will pursue regarding peace in the region, we do not see a single ray of light or a single positive sign on which to wager, or pin hopes on the possibility to see peace as a reality approaching the region. In fact, the opposite is true.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Like his predecessor Shamir, Natanyahu showed blatant hostility toward the Arabs. He also showed resentment of and evaded any commitment to Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories to the 4 June 1967 borders in implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy and those of the Security Council.

Concluding, the paper asserts that there can be no bargaining over one iota of the Golan soil, and that the U.S. and Russian cosponsors and the international community should assume their historic responsibility toward peace and achieve peace on the basis of justice and comprehensiveness. They should also commit the Israeli side to the components and bases of peace, because peace and occupation do not go together.

Syria: Editorial—Cairo Summit To Ensure 'United Arab Stand'

JN1306112296 Damascus SYRIA TIMES in English 12 Jun 96 p 5

[Editorial by Walid Shihadah: "From Damascus to Cairo Summit"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There is no doubt that the tripartite summit held in Damascus recently has laid the strong foundation for reviving Arab solidarity and for activating joint Arab action vis-a-vis the new developments resulting from the May 29 Israeli elections. The leaders who met and the venue of the meeting have special significance. Damascus has always been, and will continue to be, the throbbing heart of the Arab nation and the staunch defender of Arab rights and causes. This venue has always held up the banner of Arab unity and solidarity, calling for a united Arab stand to face the various challenges.

With this in mind the leader of Damascus called again and again for a joint Arab action. President al-Asad hosted the summit which brought together as a first step the leaders of Egypt and Saudi Arabia. President Mubarak showed up and King Fahd was represented by Crown Prince 'Abdallah. Both countries together with Syria have their weight in the region, and what they agree will have a strong impact. Their meeting is, as predicted, the basis of an effective Arab solidarity. One of the results of this significant summit is the call for an Arab summit to be held in Cairo on June 21-23. President Mubarak wasted no time and began inviting the Arab leaders who positively responded.

The fact that the Middle East peace process is in danger has brought about the positive response of the Arab leaders. It was the major topic of discussion at the tripartite summit in Damascus, whose final communique reaffirmed that just and comprehensive peace is the Arabs' strategic choice, that the way to achieve this peace is through adherence to the bases of the peace process represented by the UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the land-for-peace principle and Resolution 425 concerning Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, and the implementation of those resolutions in other words, the realization of peace that ensures security and stability in the region depends first and foremost on the implementation of the international legitimacy resolutions that provide for Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories to the lines of June 4, 1967. Those principles of the peace process seem to be hanging in the air after Netanyahu, the Likud-chief has been elected to lead the new Israeli government. Rather, he has already declared his attitude towards the peace process, when he spelled out his Nos—no to withdrawal from the Golan, no to Palestinian state and no to pull-back from Jerusalem.

The Damascus summit set the stage for a united Arab stand towards the new developments in the region and for safeguarding the peace process. The Cairo summit is to come out with a formula of joint Arab action, affirming the Arab adherence to the principles of the peace process so that just and comprehensive peace with honour is achieved in the region where injustice is removed and occupation of Arab territories is ended, where security is ensured for all and not at the expense of any party. Arab rights must be protected and a united

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stand with effective solidarity are to be ensured at Cairo summit.

Syria: Summit Not To 'Close the Doors' to New Israeli Rulers

JN1306200196 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1810 GMT 13 Jun 96

[Commentary by Yusuf Maqdisi from "Behind the Events" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear viewers, good evening: Until the date of the 21-23 June expanded Arab summit comes, the following points must be stressed:

1. For Syria and the Arabs, peace is a strategic option rather than a transient demand. Proceeding from this option, Syria supported the U.S. initiative and took part in the Madrid conference and the subsequent Maryland discussions, which were suspended by Israel.

2. Peace cannot live with occupation or any of its forms. This is the gist of the land-for-peace principle.

3. Israeli troops' withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories to the 4 June 1967 borders and ensuring the Palestinian people's national rights, including the right to establish their independent state with Arab Jerusalem as its capital, constitute the basis for achieving a just, comprehensive peace. This is in line with President Hafiz al-Asad's call for a full peace in return for comprehensive withdrawal.

4. These Arab constants, which are supported by the international legitimacy, represent the Arab stand which deems peace a strategic option.

But, have the successive Israeli governments since the Madrid conference late 1991 shared this view with the Arabs taking part in the peace process? The answer can be deduced by the fact that what was achieved so far are nothing but steps that do not represent a just, comprehensive peace. This is because Israel has so far not declared its readiness for full withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and Arab Jerusalem. It also objects to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

If the Damascus tripartite summit was held to study the changes in the region and to decide Arab action after reviving it through activating Arab solidarity, it also emphasized that the Cairo summit should be held to close Arab ranks and deal with the changes in the region within the framework of adherence to the Arab constants and to peace as a strategic option.

Based on this, the Cairo summit aims at reaching an Arab position that protects the peace process from being halted, frozen, and diverted from the principles on which it was launched at the Madrid conference. Therefore, it will not will close the doors in face of peace and in face of the new Israeli rulers if they show a serious desire to continue the peace process that ensures security and stability for all and gives rights to those who are entitled to them.

Gentlemen: The peace road is clear and its terms of reference are also clear. Any election program that is not based on this road will certainly raise fears, especially concerning issues that deal with the essence of the conflict and the future of the region.

If shouldering responsibility at the decisionmaking summit necessitates dealing realisticly with events and providing the circumstances for a comprehensive concept concerning the developments taking place in the region and the world, then the Israeli Prime Minister-elect Netanyahu should take into consideration, while drafting his government's policy, these factors and facts that will have repercussions on the entire peace process and the situation in the region.

Hence, the Damascus tripartite summit, and the upcoming Cairo summit opened the doors for the resumption of the peace process on the basis of the Madrid terms of reference. Israel's new rulers should prove that their commitment to peace is similar to the Arab commitment to peace in order to rid the region of more dangers, tension, and cycles of violence.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Taleban Delegation Arrives in New York

LD1306152496 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to international news agencies, a high ranking Taleban delegation has arrived in New York to hold talks with U.S. officials. The report says that Mola Abas Akhond and Sher Mohammad Stanakzai, political adviser of the Taleban group, are among the delegation that has arrived in America from Germany.

The report adds that in their meeting with U.S. officials, the delegation will try to allay concerns and suspicions. It should be pointed out that Senator Brown has invited all the leaders to Washington, excluding the leaders of the Islamic Party of Afghanistan [Hezb-e Eslami, led by Golboddin Hekmatyar] and Islamic Union of Afghanistan [Ettehad-e Eslami, led by A.R. Rasul Sayyaf]. However, it is unclear whether this delegation of the Taleban group will take part in the meeting, which will be convened in Washington on 25 June, or whether another Taleban delegation will travel to Washington, led by Mola Mohammad Omar.

Afghanistan: Pakistani Party Leader Comments on Peace Process

LD1306213296 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Before leaving Peshawar for Jalalabad, esteemed Qazi Hussain Ahmad, leader of Pakistan's Jamaat-i-Islami, said yesterday that he was planning to go to Afghanistan to strengthen the peace process between the Mojahedin groups and was hoping to succeed, as he did last time.

Esteemed Qazi Hussain Ahmad said that he hoped that the accord between the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] and Jam'iyat-e Eslami [Islamic Society] will become a foundation for peace and understanding in Afghanistan, and the Taleban group must (?join) this peace process.

He added that the Taleban group had no permissible cause to continue the fighting and they were religiously bound to choose the path of peace and dialogue in order to find a solution for the issues.

The leader of the Jamaat-i Islami Pakistani added: A few days ago in Turkey I held talks with Mowlana Fazlorrahman. He told me that he will use his influence to encourage the Taleban group to enter the peace process. Mowlana Fazlorrahman also said that last year he [words indistinct] to convene talks between the Taleban and the government. A number of POW's were also exchanged, but later the Taleban group backtracked, and went back on their commitments. The peace process was thus foiled and I have serious complaints against the Taleban.

Concerning the invitation to a number of Afghans to visit Washington in the name of peace, Qazi Hussain Ahmad said: The Mojahedin should not chase the Americans for peace and go to Washington.

According to another report, the leader of Pakistan's Jamaat-i Islami, in his interview with FME [as heard] news agency, said that peace will soon prevail in Afghanistan with the setting up of an Islamic government. All Islamic parties will be given a chance to take part in forming such a government. The Taleban group is a movement and talks should also be conducted with them with a view to their taking part in this government.

Qazi Hussain Ahmad added: Some unpatriotic and treacherous elements are trying to dismember Afghanistan, but the Afghan nation will dash their hopes.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Latest Unofficial Results for 271 Seats Reported

BK1306132596 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1200 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The latest unofficial results for 271 parliamentary seats for which elections were held yesterday have been received from the Election Commission. Out of these, the Awami League has won 133 seats, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party [BNP] has won 104 seats, the Jatiya Party has won 29 seats, the Jamaat-i-Islami has won two seats, the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-Rab won one seat, Islami Oikya Jote won one seat, and an independent candidate won one seat.

The Election Commission has said that the results at 122 polling centers in 27 constituencies have been postponed. The number of polling centers in the constituencies where election results have been postponed are as follows: One polling center in the Barisal-2 constituency; one polling center in the Narsinghdi-4 constituency; six polling centers in the Narayanganj-2 constituency; two polling centers in the Faridpur-2 constituency; one polling center in the Sylhet-3 constituency; six polling centers in the Comilla-9 constituency; two polling centers in the Chandpur-2 constituency; two polling centers in the Feni-2 constituency; six polling centers in the Chandpur-1 constituency; four

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polling centers in the Chittagong-11 constituency; three polling centers in the Brahmanbaria-1 constituency; four polling centers in the Chittagong-5 constituency; three polling centers in the Serajganj-7 constituency; two polling centers in the Sylhet-4 constituency; one polling center in the Patuakhali-2 constituency; seven polling centers in the Chittagong-6 constituency; three polling centers in the Comilla-7 constituency; one polling center in the Sylhet-1 constituency; one polling center in the Sylhet-5 constituency; five polling centers in the Comilla-4 constituency; 15 polling centers in the Comilla-10 constituency; four polling centers in the Jamalpur-2 constituency; four polling centers in the Comilla-8 constituency; nine polling centers in the Comilla-12 constituency; five polling centers in the Comilla-6 constituency; 10 polling centers in the Comilla-3 constituency; and 10 polling centers in the Comilla-2 constituency.

A decision has been sought by the chief election commissioner regarding the terrorism that took place in the Banskhali-2 constituency.

Bangladesh: Commissioner Reports 74 Percent Voter Participation

BK1306155296 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena organized a news conference at the Election Commission office in Dhaka this afternoon. Addressing the news conference, the chief election commissioner described the casting of votes by the people at the polling centers yesterday as a new [word indistinct]. He said there was mass awareness regarding the elections. Abu Hena said that female voters felt secure as a result of different measures taken by the commission, and they assembled in large numbers to cast their votes.

He reported an average of 74 percent voter participation in yesterday's elections. Voter participation was 82 percent in the Khulna Division. The chief election commissioner reported 78 percent voter participation in Rajshahi, 74 percent in Sylhet, about 74 percent in Dhaka, 66 percent in Barisal, and 63 percent in Chittagong Division. He said out of a total of 56.70 million voters, about 41.50 million voters exercised their right to vote. He said the elections were more or less free, fair, transparent, and impartial.

The chief election commissioner said that there were some incidents of violence and anarchy and that attempts were made to use unfair methods, but these are not worth mentioning.

Bangladesh: Repolling Ordered in 27 Constituencies

BK1306162996 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1600 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Complete unofficial results of 271 seats have so far been received from the Election Commission for yesterday's Jatiya Sangsad [parliament] elections. Out of 271 seats, Bangladesh Awami League bagged 133 seats, Bangladesh Nationalist Party secured 104, Jatiya Party got 29 seats, Jamaat-i-Islami two, JSD-Rab [Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-Rab] one, Islami Okiya Jote one, and independent one.

According to the Election Commission, results of 123 polling centers in 27 constituencies have been postponed, and repolling in these constituencies will be held on the 19th of June. Results of Satkhira-2 constituency have been referred to the chief election commissioner for decision, while the Election Commission has asked the returning officer of Brahmanbaria-1 constituency to submit a report of the results of the constituency.

Bangladesh: Awami League Chief Stakes Claim To Form Government

BK1306164196 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1600 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The chief of the Bangladesh Awami League, Sheikh Hasina, has said the just held parliamentary elections on the whole were reasonably fair. Speaking at a crowded news conference in Dhaka tonight, Sheikh Hasina said the large turnout at the polling stations demonstrated their keen interest in exercising their franchise to elect a government of their choice. She said peoples interest in the polls added a new dimension to the poll monitoring exercise.

The Awami League chief said her party is now ready to form the government and is waiting to get a call from the president as a single majority party. She said they would start a process of reconciliation in consultation with all the political parties to form a national consensus to run the administration.

In reply to a question, Sheikh Hasina said all the outstanding problems with India, including the Ganges water issue, will be resolved amicably. Sheikh Hasina thanked the Election Commission and all other concerned for their untiring efforts in holding the elections so [word indistinct]. In this respect, she specially expressed her gratitude to the neutral caretaker government headed by Justice Mohammad Habibur Rahman.

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Bangladesh: Awami Leader Begins Government Formation

BK1406074496 Hong Kong AFP in English 0725 GMT 14 Jun 96

[Report by Golam Tahaboor]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DHAKA, June 14 (AFP) — Sheikh Hasina Wajed began work Friday [14 June] to form a new Bangladeshi government following general elections in which her Awami League emerged as the largest party after 21 years in the political wilderness.

Although the results from 29 constituencies have yet to be determined, Wajed met with her advisors and others to discuss forming a government later this month, party officials said.

With the results declared from 271 of the 300 parliamentary constituencies, the Awami League has won 133 seats to emerge as the largest single party and and needs 18 more for an absolute majority.

Twenty-nine constituencies have yet to be decided. Repolling will be held in 27 of them on June 19 following irregularities in Wednesday's [12 June] general elections, while the results in the two other constituencies were held up on legal grounds.

Wajed, 49, is expected to be chosen by newly elected Awami League MPs as leader of the party's parliamentary group in next few days, clearing her way to be Muslim Bangladesh's second women prime minister succeeding her arch-rival Khaleda Zia, party sources said.

Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) had the second largest number of seats with 104, followed by the Jatiya Party (JP) of jailed military dictator Hussain Mohammad Ershad with 29. The fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami had two seats and three others were won by two small parties and an independent.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas has to call on the winning party to form a government once he is satisfied of their majority in the national parliament. An official at the presidential palace said Biswas was waiting for the final results before inviting Wajed, as leader of the largest parliamentary group, to form the government.

The Awami League has been out of power since the post-independence League government was overthrown in a 1975 military coup. If it does not win an absolute majority of seats, Wajed might seek support from Ershad's Jatiya Party or smaller parties to form the government, party officials indicated.

But political commentators said the Awami League could draw heavy criticism from voters if it allies with Ershad, imprisoned on graft charges, given Wajed's campaign pledge to fight against corruption.

Wajed said she was ready to form the government and was waiting for the president's call.

"I would like to reassure the nation that we are fully prepared to assume this responsibility ... There should be no attempt to thwart the electoral victory of the people," she said Thursday [13 June] in her first post-poll comments.

A record 73 percent of voters turned out in Wednesday's [12 June] election, which was certified as free and fair by foreign election observers. But BNP's deputy leader Badruddoza Chowdhury Thursday said the party had complained to the election commission about alleged fraud in 111 constituencies and demanded repolling there.

Zia, 51, is expected to speak at a news conference later Friday, the first since her BNP lost the elections. She guided BNP back to power in 1991 after nine years of pro-democracy campaigns against Ershad, but resigned in March in the face of a prolonged opposition campaign against her rule.

India

India: Official Reacts To Pakistani Missile Deployment Reports

BK1406034996 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi has expressed concern over the reports in the U.S. press regarding deployment of M-11 missiles by Pakistan. An official spokesman said in New Delhi today that the reports are being ascertained through various sources, including the United States. He said the government will take all necessary measures to safeguard the country's security and national interests.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent Madhunath] It was for the first time that a U.S. intelligence report confirmed that Pakistan had a nuclear delivery capability. The report concluded that Pakistan had deployed these operational Chinese M-11 missiles strategically. This development would bring a major change in the geostrategic balance between Pakistan and India, with India having no other option other than developing defensive mechanism.

[Jasjit Singh, Director of Institute of Defense Studies and Analyses] We need to ensure that we have adequate defense system, defense capability against missile

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threat. When you look at that, you find that in fact India is surrounded by ballistic missiles. China has hundreds of them — six missile armies in fact: with nuclear weapons; without nuclear weapons. Pakistan has had them for many years. They tested a missile in 1989. There is no real defense against ballistic missiles. United States is now trying to create ballistic missile defenses, which is likely to cost somewhere between $50 to $60 billion. For country like India, therefore, for next 30, 40, 50 years, the only solution is to have adequate missile capability to deter somebody from using missiles against us. This is why it is so necessary to keep the Prithvi into a production system and to induct them into service so that we have the basic defense capability available in case we are threatened.

[Madhunath] The transfer of these Chinese M-11 missiles to Pakistan is seen as a game plan to skirt MTCR [Missile Technology Control Regime] as they cross the control limit and have an effective range of 400 km with a payload of 800 kg and an option of launch mobility.

[Jasjit Singh] To what extent does the M-11 supply violate the MTCR or United States laws? Well, it is a nuclear capable missile. When China had initially advertised the missile, they were talking of this as a 400-km range and 800-kg payload missile which is well above the MTCR guideline limits. The question then from their [U.S.] point of view is: Does it violate the regime, does it violate U.S. laws? That really is for the United states to decide.

[Madhunath] The findings of the report is expected to trigger U.S. economic sanctions against both China and Pakistan based on a 1990 anti-proliferation law. Limited sanctions were imposed on China in 1993 for selling M-11 components to Pakistan but, however, got lifted next year after the Chinese foreign minister and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher signed an agreement halting sale of M-11 and similar missiles. The final decision of the economic sanctions rests on the U.S. President who can waiver the sanctions in the national security interests of the country.

Madhunath, Doordarshan News in New Delhi. [end recording]

India: 'Legitimate Claims' to Permanent UN Security Council Seat Stressed

BK1306125696 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 13 Jun 96 p 8

[Article by J.N. Dixit: "No Seat for India?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Security Council summit held on January 31, 1992, was the culmination of various suggestions under discussion among the Western democracies for the establishment of a new world order after the end of the Gulf War and the cold war. The summit generally endorsed two objectives: first, that the United Nations should play a more active role in maintaining international peace and stability; secondly, that the UN Secretariat should be reorganised, backed up by an expanded Security Council, to meet the objectives.

The Indian stand was that the strengthening of the UN and its becoming proactive should be subject to the stipulation of the sovereignty of member states being respected. We endorsed the idea of the expansion of the Security Council provided it was determined by the motive of democratising the UN and not by any covert intention reflecting the power and status of any individual country.

The need for making the Security Council more democratic needs no reiteration. The membership of the Council (five permanent plus 10 non-permanent members) was determined at the time of founding of the UN whose membership then was a little less than 50. Over the last 25 years, its membership has risen from 116 to 185. The enlarged membership itself necessitates an expansion of the Council to make it more representative of the General Assembly and to enable it to reflect the views of the general membership.

Under the existing arrangement, a majority of the UN members has never been given an opportunity to serve on the Security Council. Out of the 185 members, 77 countries have never served on the Council. Sixteen of them belong to Africa, 17 to Eastern Europe, 18 to Latin America and the Caribbean and seven to Western Europe and other countries. The largest number of countries which have never sat in the Council come from Asia, numbering 28. Forty seven countries have only served on the Council as non-permanent members for a single term. It is obvious, therefore, that democracy in the Council has to be ensured by a more strict and equitable application of geographical representation.

The Security Council, as conceived at the end of World War II, was essentially reflective of two phenomena. First, the domination of the Allied Powers of World War II over the world order was sought to be established through the newly-created UN. Secondly, the veto power conferred on the permanent members was to see that the international equilibrium and power of vested interests were not disturbed by simple majority decisions in the Council. Non-permanent members being allowed into the Council was essentially a token gesture to prove the Council's democratic bona fides. This has not been and is not a satisfactory state of affairs.

Some of the more significant proposals are:

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(i) That the number of permanent members should be increased from five to seven with Japan and Germany being inducted into the Council. This suggestion has come from the United States and endorsed by some of the Western democracies. No clear indications have been given whether Japan and Germany should be permanent members without veto power.

(ii) That the Council should be expanded with Japan and Germany being inducted as early as possible as permanent members, plus three more permanent members being inducted later from Latin America and the Caribbean, from Africa and Asia respectively. This would mean the expansion of the Council from 15 to 20 with 10 permanent and 10 non-permanent members. General indications given are that the new permanent members from Asia, Africa and South America may not have the veto power.

Then there is the proposal of having either five or seven permanent members with 15 non-permanent members, out of whom five at any given point of time may be given a longer tenure, designating them as semi-permanent members, their tenure being of four to five years. The independent advisory group which Secretary-General Butrus Butrus-Ghali appointed to advise him on the restructuring of the UN has recommended the expansion of the Council from 15 to 23. But it has not gone into details about the criteria by which the membership should be expanded and the kind of powers the expanded Council should have.

An Italian proposal suggests that the present permanent members should be retained. Ten new non-permanent elective seats should be created in the Council in addition to the existing 10 non-permanent ones. Thus the Council will consist of 25 members — 20 non-permanent and five permanent. The 10 newly created non-permanent seats would be regionally distributed as follows: five to Asia and Africa, two to Latin America and the Caribbean, two to Western Europe and one to Eastern Europe. On each of these 10 seats, three countries from each region would rotate. Each of these countries would serve a two-year term once every six years. The remaining 10 non-permanent seats would be available to other member countries from different regions.

The Italian proposal also suggests that the list of countries from each region, which would be eligible for the 10 new seats, would be reviewed by the General Assembly once every 12 to 18 years to determine the fitness of individual countries from each region to be on this list of what one may call more permanent or semi-permanent seats.

Our response to the proposals for expanding the Security Council so far has been on the following lines:

(i) We are opposed to a piecemeal expansion of the permanent membership of the Council with just Japan and Germany being inducted into it. We feel that the exercise of expanding the Council should be a one-time effort. The UN Charter has to be amended appropriately and the Council should be expanded giving due representation to all regions and all categories of the members of the UN.

(ii) The Council should have a balanced geographical representation, taking into account demographic, economic and regional considerations. There should be no distinction between the older permanent members and new permanent members which may constitute the Council in terms of their status and veto power. All permanent members should have equal responsibilities and equal power. The permanent membership should be conferred on the basis of three criteria: the track record of the country's commitment to the UN Charter and its ideals, the track record of a country in participating in UN's peace-keeping, social and development activities, and the track record in fulfilling the financial obligations to the UN.

While India may meet all these criteria and put forward legitimate claims for permanent membership of the Security Council, the ground reality is that getting a permanent membership will be a long haul because of Asian regional dissension's about the Indian candidature and rival candidatures from other large countries of Asia. Our reservations about the world's mainstream orientation on non-proliferation, comprehensive test ban and missile development issues would be used as a handle by the United States and influential countries to question our claim to a permanent seat.

Given the limited prospects of our becoming a permanent member of the Council, but at the same time the desirability of our having an important role in UN operations, three suggestions come to mind. First, we must advocate the abolition of the veto power of the permanent members. Secondly, we may examine the possibility of the Council having a larger number of permanent members to overcome the difficulties of regional rivalries. Thirdly, we must give [word indistinct] thought to the Italian proposal.

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India: Likud Win Poses 'Fresh Dilemmas' for India's Foreign Policy

BK1306105196 Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 12 Jun 96 p 9

[Article by A.N.D. Haksar: "Solid Fears of a Likud Diet: Likud's Win May Force India To Reconsider Its West Asia Policy"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The recent elections in Israel have not received the attention they deserve in India. India has been preoccupied with the political drama that has followed its own elections. The Likud victory has made waves in west Asia and the ripples will soon reach distant shores including India's, posing fresh dilemmas for foreign policy makers. The election results have raised the spectre of a slowed down west Asian peace process. This could lead to a revival of earlier confrontations, forcing difficult choices on countries friendly to both Israel and the Arabs. In the five years since the peace process was launched with the Madrid talks, political polarisation has gradually diminished in west Asia. Now there is a concern this trend may be reversed with the new Israeli government.

The joint declaration of principles in 1993 in which Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation recognised each other was a historic breakthrough. It was symbolised by the famous handshake between the former Israeli prime minister, Yitzhaq Rabin, and the PLO chief, Yasir 'Arafat, at the White House in Washington.

But it was also denounced by Arab hard liners and right wing Israeli opposition groups as a compromise of their respective interests. The former resorted to suicide bombings, while the extremism fuel led by the latter led to Rabin's assassination.

The defeat of Shim'on Peres by Binyamin Netanyahu is likely to reduce the momentum for compromise from the Israeli end. It may also strengthen 'Arafat's Arab and Islamist critics, forcing him to harden his so far moderate approach.

Immediate points of contention include the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the West Bank town of Hebron in keeping with the agreements already made. Far more basic is the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. Netanyahu's declared opposition to such concessions may provide fresh ammunition to groups like the Islamic Resistance Front, better known as Hamas, Hizbullah and their supporters. This possibility is increased by the standoff between Israel and Syria over the Golan Heights.

Apart from those living in the region, the consequences of intensified polarisation would first affect the United States and its moderate Arab allies like Egypt and Jordan. They have staked much political capital on the peace process, as has the European Union. Next to be affected would be Arab and Islamic states who are unsympathetic to Israel, but tacitly support peace because of their strategic links with the US.

The issue of Palestine has been on the back burner in the United Nations, the nonaligned movement, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and other groups the last few years. If the Arab Israeli confrontation increases the issue may again take centre stage in these fora. India too may be obliged to take a position beyond merely supporting the peace process.

Despite potential for cooperation, for four decades bilateral relations between India and Israel remained conditional on the former maintaining close ties with the Arabs. It was only in 1992, after the peace process began and 'Arafat had given his assent, that India established full diplomatic relations with Israel. The rapid growth of relations in the last four years has reflected the many ways in which the two countries can cooperate. India has also preserved its Arab links. This successful balancing act could come under pressure if tensions are revived in west Asia.

Unlike other foreign policy issues which have been hanging fire since before the advent of the H.D. Deve Gowda government, the current scenario in west Asia is a comparatively new development. This has diplomatic implications which the external affairs minister, I.K. Gujral, with his past experience of the Iraq-Kuwait crisis, will ponder in the days with his past to come.

Israel held its first two track election last month. Each citizen cast two votes. One for a parliamentarian, the other for a prime minister. The parliamentary election followed the same system as before. In the proportional representation system followed by Israel, electors do not vote for individuals, but for lists of candidates presented by recognised parties whose strength in parliament is in numerical proportion to the votes each party list obtains.

This system gives representation to many small parties who, as was found between 1988 and 1992, wield disproportionate influence in coalition governments. Electoral law now provides a national referendum for the election of prime minister. Candidates for this office may also head their party's list for parliamentary elections.

Netanyahu is the first to be elected prime minister by the new method. It is hard to say how the new system will work especially if the prime minister does not win a stable majority in parliament. Theoretically since the prime minister is elected by popular mandate, it may be politically difficult for parliament to reject him and also

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get itself dissolved. But the mandate is marginal: out of three million votes cast, Peres lost by barely 30,000. Netanyahu will need to be a prudent statesman to unite the country behind the twin objectives of security and peace.

Israel's new electoral model attempts to provide a directly elected politically strong executive, independent of but responsible to parliament. For India heading into a period of coalition governments dependent on regional support, it will be interesting to see how the Israeli experiment of constitutional unity in diversity works.

India: Spokesman Denies Press Reports on Probe Into Urea Scam

BK1406023696 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government has refuted certain press reports that its machinery was stalling the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] investigations into the alleged irregularities in the import of urea by the public sector National Fertilizers Limited. An official spokesman said in New Delhi today that both the Cabinet Secretariat and the PMO [Prime Minister's Office] have separately advised the Department of Fertilizers to institute a probe into the issue. It had also directed that the CBI should investigate it. The spokesman said that reports in a section of the press in the matter have been misrepresenting facts to insinuate that the cabinet secretary and PMO officials had caused delay in instituting the CBI probe. Meanwhile, four Delhi-based senior officials of the State Bank of India, including a deputy general manager, have been suspended in connection with advance money remittances aggregating $38 million on behalf of the National Fertilizers Limited in November 1995.

India: Senior Ruling Party Leader Expelled for 'Anti-Party' Acts

BK1306125596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Senior Janata Dal leader, Mr. Ramakrishna Hegda, has been expelled from the party for anti-party activities. This was announced by the party president, Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav, in New Delhi today. In a five-page statement, Mr. Yadav said Mr. Hegde's recent statements about the prime minister, the United Front, and its policies are against party discipline.

Iran

Iran: Official Denies Bahraini Accusations

LD1106191396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 11 Jun 96

[Unattributed station commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign minister's deputy for education and research, Abbas Maleki, in a press conference on Sunday 9 June, said that the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to probe Bahrain's government's allegations on the role of Iran in Bahrain's domestic affairs, by sending a delegation to this country.

Maleki further denied the accusations of Bahraini officials toward the Islamic Republic of Iran and said that Bahrain's issue is a domestic one. He hoped that Bahrain's officials will correct their mistake on relaying their domestic problems to foreign agents.

The foreign minister's deputy elaborated Bahrain's government's motives on accusing Iran, adding that Bahrain's officials last week forced some of the dissidents to relate themselves to Iran, relaying their domestic issues to foreign agents.

Maleki's comments clear the fact that Bahrain's officials cannot solve their problems by relating their domestic affairs to foreign agents.

According to political experts, solving Bahrain's crisis is possible by compromise via talks and paying attention to the demands of the majority of the people, while Bahrain officials pay less attention to it and accuse Iran of interfering in Bahrain affairs.

Meanwhile, sending experts to Bahrain to probe the allegations of Bahrain's officials clearly shows that Tehran is certain about the wrong accusations of the Bahraini officials.

The political efforts and propaganda of Bahrain's officials to cover their pseudo-claims on Iran is an act on the line of illicit demands of world arrogance against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Holding meetings, such as the recent gathering of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council's head of joint chief of staff, is a useless action to the advantage of foreigners in the region, which will never solve Bahrain's domestic problems.

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Iran: Radio Criticizes Clinton Allegations, U.S. Bahrain Role

LD1306141996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1145 GMT 13 Jun 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Based on an order issued on 12 June by Bahrain's Amir Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the country is to be divided into four provinces consisting of smaller areas, which will be led by a governor. Such reforms will take place in Bahrain following one and a half years of unrest rocking this small Persian Gulf country. The issue, which has caught the attention of the observers most of all, is that how such a change would affect peace and stability in that country?

Political experts maintain, should such divisions take place with popular participation and decentralization, they will have a positive impact on the island's stability. However, in case the people continue to be barred of participating in issues of national interest, Manama's recent decision will fail to yield any positive results in resolving the simmering crisis in Bahrain, for the people are calling for a return of freedom registered in the Constitution and a reopening of the country's parliament which was dissolved on the order of the Bahraini amir in 1975.

Such calls by the people have, however, raised tough responses by the security forces, led by a British subject. Such an attitude has not only been protested by opposition groups, but also by many international organizations claiming to endorse human rights. Amnesty International on Wednesday, 12 June, in its latest statement on Bahrain, expressed concern over the fate of six prisoners who were arrested on charges of involvement in a conspiracy against the Bahraini regime. Amnesty International, reiterating that it has evidence at hand proving that prisoners are tortured to make confessions, added fears that false confessions have been extracted by the six prisoners under duress.

Elsewhere, confessions made by the prime suspect, charged with trying to overthrow the ruling Bahraini regime, have questioned his and his friends' links with Iran, for he has explicitly conceded to have purchased arms through the Saudi Government. However, it seems that the U.S. and the Western governments are attempting to fan up tensions existing in the Tehran-Manama ties in order to secure their illegitimate interests in the Persian Gulf. To the same end, U.S. President Bill Clinton, in his message to the Bahraini amir, has once again brought up unfounded allegations implicating Iran in intervention in other countries' internal affairs.

The French foreign minister, in a softer approach, has called on Iran not to intervene in the internal affairs of others. However, political analysts believe that the Western governments, especially the USA, through such posturing, are trying to paint a tension-ridden picture of the region in a bid to consolidate their own military presence in the Persian Gulf and sell more weapons to southern governments of this region.

Iran: Paper Says Bahrain Issue 'Tempest in a Teapot'

LD1206174896 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 8 Jun 96 p 16

[Unattributed commentary: "Half a Glance, Bahrain; Tempest in a Teapot"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bahrain has been beset by unrest in recent years and the situation is deteriorating daily. And now the Bahraini authorities are accusing Iran of involvement in this unrest, without substantiating their claim. It seems as if they are pointing a finger at Iran in order to escape the truth.

The root cause of Bahrain's crisis can be found by reviewing the following points:

1. The ruler of Bahrain, Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, dissolved the country's parliament in the year 1975. Despite making repeated promises to obey the constitution, new elections were not held and the parliament remains shut.

2. The people do not feel they play a part in running the country, because the Manama government does not allow them to express their views. The people of Bahrain believe there is no democracy and freedom in Manama.

3. The people are heavily suppressed. AFP reports that 1,106 people, including children and young boys, are detained for their beliefs.

4. There is no respect for human rights. Prisoners are tortured ruthlessly, and a special envoy of the UN has admitted this. In this respect, the Movement for the Liberation of Bahrain in its statement announced: If Bill Clinton was tortured only for 15 minutes the way we are tortured, he would confess that he is in charge of Hizballah's missiles in Lebanon!

5. Even Bahrain's neighbor, Sultan Qabus of Oman, formally declared that the crisis in Bahrain is deep-rooted.

Bahrain would benefit from studying the fate of its closest neighbor, Qatar, where the ruler passed his sell-by date.

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Iran: Commentary Criticizes Bahraini Leadership Actions

LD1306141896 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 10 Jun 96 p 11

[Commentary: "Manama Needs Wise Leaders"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Shaykhdom of Bahrain has been burning in the flames of internal discontent for the past 18 months. The Manama regime has been able to quell the internal crisis and to control the ever-increasing anger of its people through suppressing and intimidating them. That is why it accused the Islamic Republic of Iran of supporting the Bahraini dissatisfied masses, as well as to justify its incompetence in controlling its society. [passage omitted]

The accusations of the Bahraini regime against Iran are, in fact, part of the incitement dictated by the West and Zionists in the region. They are part of a plan to make people forget about the permanent danger posed by the usurper Israel. Unfortunately, the Arab shaykhs are using any kind of instrument even resorting to highlighting repeated and stereotypical claims to contribute to this process.

In the past 17 years, contrary to their claims, the performance of the Arab government has not been aimed at resolving their differences [with Iran] over crises created by themselves, or at resolving their differences regarding their ties with Iran. Instead, they have moved, willingly or unwillingly, in the direction of deepening these crises and of further inflaming the political security situation in the Persian Gulf region. They have prepared the necessary grounds for the further entry, presence, and infiltration of foreign forces in the region.

In the past five years since the oil war [Iraq-Kuwait] the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf region, including the small Shaykhdom of Bahrain, have imported weapons worth billions of dollars from the Western countries, especially from the United States, Britain, and France, thereby turning the region into an arsenal.

In addition, every now and then we witness naval exercises with the participation of U.S. forces in the region. The exercises take place with the active participation of shaykhdoms which have always spoken about the need to establish regional security with the help of the littoral countries. [passage omitted]

Under the influence of propaganda organized by Britain, the United States, and Israel, the Arab governments are generally unaware of a danger — that is the usurper Zionists — that is threatening their political, cultural, and social existence and identity. They are willingly or unwillingly strengthening the danger, which is attached to the ailing body of the world of Islam like a filthy tumor. Many differences, territorial or political, that exist among the Arab regimes in the southern region of the Persian Gulf are the results of divisive propaganda by the world arrogance. Unfortunately, there are no such wise leaders, not in Bahrain or in any other shaykhdoms of the Persian Gulf or in any part of the Middle East, who understand the danger of their unwise policy performance towards the United States and Zionism.

Iran: Commentary on U.S.-Bahrain Policy Objectives

NC1306184196 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 10 Jun 96 p 12

[Commentary by F. Asef: "The Old Saga of Bahrain and Washington's New Objectives"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Bahrain Government has once again propounded the ancient saga of Iran's interference in its internal affairs. It brought a number of people on television in a rigged charade, so they could confess that during the recent events in that country they had links with Iran.

Why are these incidents being raised in the context of Iran?

In answer to that question, it may be stated: The U.S. sanctions encountered failure due to Iran's policies of construction.

Washington not only failed to isolate Iran, its own rift with Germany grew deeper. (Of course, this does not imply that Germany and all other European countries do not have a joint red line against the United States with regard to [relations with] Iran)

Simultaneously, with Binyamin Netanyahu coming into power in the occupied territories, the Middle East peace process suffered intense shocks, to the extent that forging ranks among Arabs and Israel entered a new phase. In the past week, the Arab leaders convened three consecutive summits for this reason. Similarly, the convocation of elections in the occupied territories exposed the weakness in social cohesion in the Zionist regime.

Meanwhile, the inauguration of the Golden circle (the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railroad) has revived the Silk Road and displayed Iran's politico-economic strength. A new chapter opened for the newly independent Central Asian countries. Iran and Russia have strived to renew their relations on the basis of new norms, and to redefine their foreign policy to seek the reasons for similarities and dissimilarities between them.

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In order to isolate Tehran, within the framework of the policy of dual containment, the United States sought to hinder Iran from achieving these gains. However, now that the peace process has suffered some shocks, and according to the White House, one of the main factors for the failure of the peace process at this juncture has manifested itself — as is evident in the martyrdom-seeking operations of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] with Tehran's support (!) — in the results of the Zionist regime's elections. So the United States and the Zionist regime are trying to rally an international coalition, with the cooperation of the Arab countries of the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, against Iran.

However, to attain the above conditions and to transform Iran into a dismembered scorched earth region (like Iraq), Washington must first succeed in preventing Europe's talks with Iran and in making the countries of this continent align themselves with its own belligerent and militaristic policies (as was done in the case of Iraq).

Hence the United States is eager to propound the Bahrain issue (similar to Iraq's aggression against Kuwait) by projecting Iran's image before international public opinion as a violent one, which is constantly seeking to interfere in the internal affairs of the littoral countries of the Persian Gulf. It endeavors to depict Iran as an opponent of all human right norms that are accepted by Western public opinion.

There is no doubt that if Washington succeeds in presenting such a visage of Iran to the world, its misanthropic moves against Iran will enter a military phase. Of course, Washington will subsequently attempt to bring about the necessary reforms in the shaykhdom. Until that objective is achieved, the United States will, on the one hand attempt to salvage the peace process — in its own estimate — and on the other, it will expand the international front against Tehran.

It is therefore necessary that the Islamic Republic of Iran consult the Arabs and explain its opinions and perspectives to the newly-emerged powers in the new world order, so that the plots of the United States and Israel are foiled.

Iran: Paper Discusses Problems in Bahraini System

LD1306202096 Tehran RESALAT in Persian
9 Jun 96 pp 1, 16

[Article by Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh: "Bahrain, An Escape From Truth"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A demand to participate in the political life of Bahrain is both a realistic and an original one. At the same time, it is an internal crisis for the country. The legitimacy crisis multiplies the country's problem. These are internal developments and one should look inside the country to find their roots and how to resolve them. Other prescriptions such as a policy to attribute the problem to foreign sources simply mean deviation or an escape from reality.

The crisis relating to the participation in the political life of Bahrain dates back to early 1354 [Iranian year beginning March 1975], that is around four years before the Islamic revolution. [passage omitted]

The inefficiency of the Al Khalifah family and the fact that their hands are stretched towards the West, have alienated Bahrain's politics, culture, and even its economic and defense capability. Manama's policy in the region is in line with Washington's and London's regional policies. The description Manama gives to "terrorism" carries the propaganda-political weight of Washington's description. Bahrain has been turned into a base for the U.S. Fifth Fleet and the Muslim people of this country have to pay for years for the cost of empty but expensive joint defense agreements between that country and the Western countries.

Priority has been given to undermine Islamic culture in that country. The spreading of corruption in a style which is common in the West is signalling a warning bell for a decline in the culture of the Bahraini Muslims.

A running competition held 18 months ago in Bahraini streets with the participation of Western men and women has increased the dissatisfaction. In addition to their demand to participate in the political life of Bahrain, the main demands of Bahraini Muslims are mostly modelled on Iran's Islamic revolution. The reflections and ideas of the revolution cannot be halted or hindered. The reflections of the Islamic revolution could be felt in most parts of the world. One cannot interpret merely the existence of these reflections as interference. The Muslim nations more than anyone else are turning to this model to remove impurities and to free themselves from despotism and the influence of colonization.

The legitimacy of the Al Khalifah family in Bahrain is decayed from within because of oppression, infiltration of foreign factors and culture and unkindness to the majority of Shiites. An opinion to approve of the government or the system does not exist. [passage omitted]

Experience of the past few years shows that Manama's political-diplomatic onslaught against Iran intensifies in two separate political situations:

1. When there is instability inside Bahrain.

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2. When the countries in the region move towards Iran for stability and cooperation. The current juncture is the climax of Bahrain's negative activity [against Iran]. On the one hand, the internal dissatisfaction of the past 18 months is at its peak and on the other, the Arab countries in the region are gradually accepting the Islamic Republic of Iran as a reality in regional decisions.

Iran: Paper on Bahrain's Accusations Against Iran

LD1306211896 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 9 Jun 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Manama's New Gimmick"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The recent accusations made by the Bahraini authorities in respect of Iran's involvement in the 18 months of unrest and the backing of 'a plot' to topple the government, has caused a serious irritant in bilateral relations between Tehran-Manama as well as stability and security concerns in the region.

No doubt, Manama's charges should be seen as a new gimmick to divert regional and international attention from the legitimate goals of the people of Bahrain to have their parliament restored. And, of course, these allegations are not new, since the Manama authorities have repeated their charges at least four times in the past.

To show to what extent these accusations are hollow and nonsensical, it would be appropriate to refer to the Bahraini opposition who have rejected them as baseless, making the officials' claim in Manama a mockery!

Basically, the Bahraini authorities after completely failing to check the unrest, chose to adopt old tactics to discredit the opposition, who enjoy remarkable support within the Sunni and Shia communities.

It should be mentioned that today Islamic Iran enjoys very cordial relations with all its Arab neighbours in the southern Persian Gulf. This fact is illustrated by the stance adopted by those countries vis-a-vis Bahrain's allegations.

Except Iraq, which falls outside the PGCC [Persian Gulf Cooperation Council] group, no support was sounded in Arab capitals to Manama's claims.

No doubt, this is the best indication of how deeply the countries of the region are concerned about the region's stability and security at the dawn of the 21st century.

Manama's allegations come amid new efforts on the part of Islamic Iran and the southern Arab countries to build a strong base for mutual cooperation for establishment of a common security approach in the region so that no foreign presence would be justified.

Whether the White House is playing the Bahrain card in order to foment new tension in the region so as to deploy more troops at the expense of oil-rich Arab countries, should be closely examined.

Past experiences have shown that the foreign powers are the sole beneficiaries of the tension in the region.

As such, the Bahrainis should act with speed to remedy their hasty judgment and accusation of Tehran. This perhaps will help smoothen strain in ties and help preserve peace in the region.

Iran: Russian Ambassador Reaffirms Nuclear Cooperation With Iran

LD1306145796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Russia has reiterated its nuclear cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Russian ambassador to Tehran has said that the Islamic Republic of Iran does have the right to develop a nuclear reactor and it is not intent to use it in producing nuclear weapons.

In an interview with the Tehran-based English daily IRAN NEWS, Sergey Tretyakov said: The aim of building the Bushehr nuclear power plant in southern Iran by Russia is not to develop fatal weapons, but for peaceful objectives. He reiterated that when Iran signed a nuclear nonproliferation treaty and permitted its installations to be internationally inspected, Moscow decided to cooperate with Iran in the field of nuclear technology.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, based in Vienna, has stressed that the agency has no evidence to indicate that Iran is seeking to develop nuclear weapons.

Iran: TEHRAN TIMES on Strategic Relations With Russia

NC1406090996 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 11 Jun 96 p 2

[Editorial: Iran, Russia—Strategic Allies"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Following the collapse of the former Soviet Union and downfall of communism, the Russian leaders sought to put an end to the iron curtain policy and sought closer cooperation with regional countries.

Iran's geopolitical location and Russia's proximity to the Persian Gulf and Central Asian regions have prepared the groundwork for closer ties and cooperation between two mighty neighbors.

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Today, the two countries enjoy close ties and cooperation due to their similar stands on crucial regional and international issues. The common interests of both have yet further converged their short and long-term polices, turning the two neighbors into strategic allies.

In the wake of the collapse of the bipolar world order, the U.S. envisaged itself as the sole superpower in the world. Therefore, it thought of forging a new world order and expanding its sphere of influence as far as the territories on the Russian bonders.

Although Russia has done away with its old political and economic system and is set on adopting new methods of running the country, it is by no means willing to have its territorial integrity imperiled and its role in the international scene undermined.

Iran has on several occasions reiterated that it opposes the expansionist objectives sought by the U.S. and has made it quite clear that the NATO expansion and infiltration into the former Eastern European countries will not be in the interest of the regional countries.

Moreover, regarding the issues existing in some countries in the Middle East, Central Asia and Caucasus, such as Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Lebanon, the two countries have expressed similar views and cooperated in order to restore peace and stability in those countries.

Rapid economic development and implementation of infrastructural projects in Iran, particularly recent inauguration of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway, have made it even more beneficial for the two countries to cooperate in the areas of commerce, economy and technology.

As the Russian Duma vice-speaker recently noted, Iran's different commodities will find appropriate market in Russia. Also, the cooperation of Russian experts in completing Bushehr nuclear power plant has been welcomed by the Iranian authorities and accords have been signed by the two countries' officials to this end.

Considering the political will and determination of Iran and Russia to consolidate their ties and expand their cooperation in different fields, bright prospects await both countries if certain steps are taken by the officials of the two countries: import-export procedures between the two countries should be relaxed to the maximum possible level; and traders of the two countries should be given preferential treatment by both sides. This will prepare the ground for closer cooperation between the two countries in economic, political and military areas.

Iran: Paper Discusses Moscow-Tehran Economic Ties

LD1306223896 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 10 Jun 96 p 4

[Economic note by Dr. Habib Chini: "Russian-Iranian Economic Ties."]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] You have read our correspondent's interview with the Islamic Republic of Iran's ambassador to Moscow, in our Saturday [8 June] edition. In that exclusive interview, the ambassador said that he was ready to put in writing that Iran's exports to Moscow can reach to between $600-700 million per annum. At the moment Iran's annual exports to Russia amount to between $30-45 million. In return, Iran imports goods from Russia with an annual value of between $190-200 million. In the former communist Soviet system, Russia ranked as Iran's first to third partner for exports and second to fifth partner for imports. That is while at the moment it ranks 18th for imports and 20th for exports among Iran's trade partners. Following the disintegration of the communist system in the Soviet Union the volume of trade between the two countries dropped drastically although the opposite was expected. It might be said that formerly Iran's trade with the newly-formed Central Asian and trans-Caucasian countries used to be counted as part of the trade with the Soviet Union but now they are taken separately, but even if we put all that together, still, on the whole, the trade with those countries shows a reduction. That reduction is not reckoned in dollar terms deliberately; it is accounted for by taking into consideration all the exports and imports to and from that region as a whole. The reason why the dollar was avoided in this is that its purchasing power has eroded and, moreover, the rate of exchange of the rial to the dollar is different now compared to its rate in those days. The currencies are different also. The currencies of all the countries of the region under discussion, in particular the ruble, have depreciated. Under these conditions, the currencies of those countries and their rate of exchange with the dollar cannot be used in calculations. Under these conditions — and until constant monetary factors come about in the region for comparing values — the best way is to compare the ranking of each country in the total import and export volume.

Of course, calculations concerning the balance of foreign trade is another issue. On this basis, even with the reduction of the total volume of trade exchange between the two countries, there is a huge difference between Iran's imports from Russia and exports to that country. For instance, the latest figures released by the Iranian

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customs indicate that Iran's imports from Russia were six times its exports to that country.

Our ambassador to Moscow says: The ground is paved for the export of goods and products by Iran to Russia to the tune of $500-700 million; and he is ready to put that in writing. From the point of view of Russia's capacity and economic needs, there is no problem as far as Russia's ability to import annually $500-700 million worth of goods from Iran. But whether Russia, with all its severe foreign currency problems, can envisage such an amount for trade with Iran is doubtful. On the other hand, there is doubt as to whether Iran itself will be able to allocate a quarter of its non-oil exports to Russia under the present circumstances. Besides, whether it is advisable for Iran to abandon other markets under present conditions and rely on the Russian market is yet another cause for doubt; unless the planned expansion of non-oil exports — which we have discussed before — transforms from words to deeds, and that is another issue. [passage omitted]

Russia's vulnerability in foreign trade, at the moment, exceeds that in other fields. In that case, at least in the next few years, any significant expansion of trade between Iran and Russia, will have particular aspects. In other words, particular issues help the expansion of ties between the two countries. America's big mistake in imposing sanctions against Iran — where no country but Israel followed suit — instead of isolating Iran, resulted in Iran finding new friends and colleagues. That, of course, created an opportunity for future cooperation between Iran and Russia. The agreement to build the Bushehr nuclear reactor is one of the biggest projects. More cooperation is also planned. Yet, it does not seem that Iran would wish to act precipitately in its relations with Russia, and probably pave the way for a repetition of earlier undesirable procedures, before it has made certain of the good will of the new Russian regime in practice. Russia must realize today that it must demonstrate that it is neither the Tsarist Russia nor the communist Soviet Union.

Iran: Paper Discusses Israeli Operation Against Lebanon

LD1306203096 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 9 Jun 96 p 8

[Commentary by Najafi: "Grapes of Wrath"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Sharm al-Shaykh summit in March engineered by U.S. President Bill Clinton and attended by several heads of state, including Arab Kings and shaykhs, was actually a prologue to the 16-day "Operation Grapes of Wrath" launched by the former Zionist premier Shim'on Peres in April against the people of Lebanon.

This operation — 600-odd air strikes and 24,000 artillery rounds — left more than 200 people dead and about 400 wounded. Except for a dozen Hezbollah fighters all others were civilians. The number of people who fled their homes in south Lebanon exceeded 400,000. Apart from the devastation of several villages and towns in the south, newly reconstructed infrastructure such as electrical installations, power-houses, roads and port facilities were heavily damaged.

The Sharm al-Shaykh episode followed by "Operation Grapes of Wrath" planned by Clinton and perpetrated by Peres were meant to assure the victory of the Labour Party in the 29th May elections in the Zionist state and consequently help Clinton tighten his grip on the Jewish vote in the U.S. presidential elections.

After glancing at the above text my friend Jamshid, better known as Jimmy (the simpleminded) asked me whether I was aware of the reason why Peres named the attack on Lebanon as "Operation Grapes of Wrath".

I told him that probably he wanted to implicitly make it known that the scenario for the operation was written in America by naming it after the American writer John Steinbeck's novel: "The Grapes of Wrath".

"I don't think that's the reason", said Jimmy, and added: I believe he got the idea at the Sharm al-Shaykh conference in Egypt the moment he saw bunches of ripe grapes, perhaps imported from Lebanon, on the conference table. Now, Peres I'm sure, is repenting for having eaten those grapes. Clinton too will repent after the elections in the USA", said Jimmy and moving closer he soberly remarked: "You know, those were the "Grapes of Wrath".

Iran: Paper Says Netanyahu Election End to Peace Process

LD1306212896 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 9 Jun 96 pp 1, 15

[Editorial: "End of the Dream of Peace"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The election of "Netanyahu", the head of the war-mongering Likud Party in the occupied territories, has ended the mirage of peace between Arabs and Israel and has proved that at the other end of the table, there is no one who respects the Arab regimes involved in the discussions and who believes in anything but enmity against the Arabs.

These clear signs have caused great concern among Arab regimes about the outcome of the Israeli elections,

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particularly since the "Labor Party" is expressing no objection in the Zionist parliament. These facts also mean that even the so-called peaceful faction led by Peres does not think it necessary to continue its previous propaganda about the Arabs and believes it is safe to keep silent and give the war-mongering Likud party a free hand.

During his last months in office, Shim'on Peres started a criminal aggression against the Lebanese people in order to maintain his power and to demonstrate to the Zionists that he had particular capabilities in killing Muslims in that region.

But his calculations proved wrong and the very act proved his inefficiency and the fact that even the blood-soaked Peres is not a suitable player for the "peace game".

Although the election of the Likud Party means that the peace negotiations have failed, one should not think that the Israeli Labor Party was a loser. The party managed to get several weak Arab regimes to sign a desired agreement. Indeed, it is these same Arab regimes that are the losers, because they were tempted by the Israeli promises and entered negotiations after U.S. provocation. Today they bitterly feel that they have lost everything.

As for 'Arafat and his mercenaries, nothing is left but a dark record of treachery in suppressing the intifadah in favor of the occupied forces. In fact those who had invested more in this dangerous gamble have lost more.

Of course, the Cairo regime, which acts as the middle-man for the Zionists, is once again trying to infiltrate on behalf of the Israeli regime and in the hope of keeping its role as a broker for the Zionists.

[Egyptian President Husni] Mubarak had hoped that the process of compromise would benefit the Cairo regime but all his services could not change anything in his favor and finally the Zionists preferred to enter direct negotiations with the interested parties.

Today Mubarak is following a policy of double standards. On the one hand, he is trying to prove that the Arab defeat was the result of their policy of direct negotiations with Israel. This, he hopes would guarantee his role as the coordinator of Arab-Israeli relations. He is also trying to gather the Arabs around himself in order to revive the forgotten role of an "Israeli-employed broker." On the other hand, he has warned the Likud government that they should not repeat the mistake committed by Peres. They should coordinate their policies with the Cairo regime in order to save themselves from sharing Peres' fate.

It is for this reason that even if all the meetings between Arab leaders today resulted in a summit, this would fail to demonstrate Arab unity because the very coordinator of the gathering is devoted to the Zionists to the depth of his being and follows their lead.

It is not a coincident that Mubarak has attended all the recent meetings between Arab leaders. His mission is to prevent the Arabs from losing hope in the face of the Israeli elections, and to prevent them from revising their policies on Israel and destroying the compromise agreement with the Zionist regime.

The Cairo regime's mission entails using this golden opportunity to revive the old Egyptian role under the pretext of creating Arab unity. If until yesterday some Arab countries fell pray to Israel individually, today the regime in Cairo in planning to place all Arabs in the hands of Israel collectively and then receive a gift for this bitter service.

It is not totally clear how far Mubarak will succeed in his new mission but there is no doubt that there has never been any peace in the Zionist camp and now even the mirage of peace has come to an end. The election of the war-mongering Likud party has well proven this point. The Zionists have spoken their bottom line.

Iran: Commentary on Current Situation in Mideast

LD1306222596 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 8 Jun 96 p 16

[Political commentary by Reza Sokhansanj: "The Damascus Summit and the Arabs' Worry."]

[FBIS Translated Text] These days interesting, and at the same time crucial, events are taking place in the Middle East, each of which is, in its own turn, important and worthy of attention. The new political changes in the occupied territories, Likud's victory, the Arabs' worry and the Damascus Summit, as well as the outlook of the Arab-Israeli compromise are some of the issues which can be evaluated within the following axes.

1. Extremist Jews have always said that there will never be an independent Palestinian state. Jerusalem and the West Bank will be Israel's inseparable parts! This means that the humiliating compromise between 'Arafat and the former Qods [Jerusalem]-usurper regime of Shim'on Peres will be of no value for the new Zionist extremists, while the extent of pressures and constraints on the inhabitants of Gaza and the Palestinians will be increased, the brand of ignominy and abjectness will shine on 'Arafat's forehead. He will be beset by such a dreadful nightmare that will be the end of a life-time of treachery against the aspirations of the Palestinian nation!

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2. Today, the Egyptians are more worried than the others. In fact they have made more efforts than their friends to establish a so-called peace — in reality, compromise — under the banner of America. Their concern is that their role as brokers for the Zionists might fade away!

3. The Syrians, while being worried, are casting a critical eye on their Egyptian, Jordanian, and Arab shaykh friends, that is those who care for the compromise with Israel more than Damascus! The new Israeli leaders have said that they are opposed to leaving the Golan Heights. This means that the principle of exchanging peace with land — which the Syrians are banking on — will also come to a dead end.

4. The Saudis and the shaykhs of Palestine — whose injection of money and financial help form the economic mainstay of the compromise with Israel — are right to be worried these days. In future they will have to give more concessions to America. They will be plunged further into the sticky and deep mire of the compromise process, which will bring nothing for them but misery and ruin.

5. The Damascus summit will bring nothing for the Syrians. It's only result would perhaps be some kind of reassurance along with political gestures which the Arabs will bring as a souvenir for Damascus. Hafiz al-Asad now knows quite well that negotiating with the regime which occupies Qods will not benefit him, but the efforts made by his friends, especially by Mubarak, are aimed at making Damascus adopt softer stances vis-a-vis the rulers of the new Israeli regime.

6. From now on not only the extremist Zionists will not retract even one step from their positions, but also they will be seeking their greater plan which is expansionism and settlement of other world Jews in the occupied territories. They are seeking to create a Greater Israel, from the Nile to the Euphrates. Will the Arabs still continue to witness further humiliation and abjectness?!

Iran: Editorial Sees Likud Platform as 'Declaration of War'

NC1406094996 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 9 Jun 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Likud's Draft Program: A Declaration of War"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Israeli Prime Minister-elect, Binyamin Netanyahu, has released the draft program of his right-wing Likud government. The draft program, published by the Israeli press on Friday [7 June], repeats what the party had said in its election platform.

Many observers previously believed that the party might soften its stand on the so-called peace process once it won enough seats in the Parliament to form the government. Apparently, the Likud Party is out to hold fast to its election manifesto, which is tantamount to derailing the peace talks.

The draft program rules out the creation of a Palestinian state; it foresees expansion of Jewish settlements; it rejects the return of the Golan Heights to Syria; it also opposes the division of Jerusalem.

A Likud MP, Michael Eytan, who is involved in drawing up the policy guidelines, has said that an eventual peace agreement should acknowledge "Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights."

Just a glance at the draft program would be enough to find out what the PLO would gain out of its deal with Israel: the Likud government will not recognize an independent Palestinian state. This means that the Palestinian Authority will not be able to wield any substantive power in the two enclaves of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Even within these two enclaves the Israeli government will have the final word as we have already observed when it closed the West Bank prior to the elections on the pretext of security reasons.

Jerusalem will remain under the control of the Zionist regime. East Jerusalem will not be given to the Palestinians to be used as their capital.

In sum, the Palestinian Authority will be converted into an Israeli agent entrusted with the task of suppressing any anti-Israeli movement within the two enclaves.

The draft program also indicates that the Likud government will follow an expansionist policy as it calls for the Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights. Everybody knows that the Golan Heights were occupied in 1967 and that the UN has already issued a resolution demanding Israel to withdraw its troops from the heights.

Israelis know well enough that Syria will not compromise on the Golan Heights. They are also well aware that the Palestinians have historical and religious attachments to Jerusalem. Hence the Likud government's draft program may be interpreted as a declaration of war rather than a peace plan.

The Likud has sent the ball into the PLO's court. The Arab-Islamic pride of the Palestinian is at stake. The continuation of the so-called peace process will culminate in the total neglect of the Palestinian rights

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through capitulation to expansionist policies of the Zionist regime. The PLO should decide today. Tomorrow will be too late.

Iran: Foreign Ministry—U.S. 'Factor of Instability' in Mideast

LD1306173896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman described the U.S. State Department statements against Iran as a futile effort to justify U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

The spokesman, Mr. [Mahmud] Mohammadi, in a reaction to the U.S. State Department spokesman's claim that Iran was a factor of instability among the Persian Gulf regional states, said: The U.S. movements to strengthen military bases and sell more advanced arms to the regional states are the main factors of instability in the Persian Gulf region.

He described the allegations as a justification for increasing the U.S. military presence in the sensitive and strategic Persian Gulf region and added: These baseless allegations against Iran cannot explain away the failure of the U.S. Middle East policy, in particular in Lebanon and occupied Palestine.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman said: Muslim nations believe America to be the main supporter for the Zionist regime's state-terrorism and the suppressor of those who seek freedom and independence in the world.

Iran: IRGC Chief Says U.S. 'Unable' To Understand Power of Islam

LD1306213796 Tehran IRNA in English 2121 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Shiraz (Fars Prov.), June 13, IRNA — "The U.S. is unable to grasp the faith and spiritual power of the forces of Islam and is quite helpless against the martyrdom-seeking spirit of the Islamic combatants," said commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), Major General Mohsen Reza'i here today.

The IRGC chief addressing a 33,000-strong gathering of IRGC and volunteer (basij) forces at an 'allegiance to the leadership' camp some 40 kms from here, said that those who listen to the analysis of a few listless liberals should better take a look at this powerful presence of the sons of revolution and revise their calculations.

"The hezbollah forces warn all those who, either in ignorance or to serve vested interests, have started a cultural war at universities, newspapers and foreign news agencies, that the victory of the forces of Islam in the cultural battle is without doubt a decisive one like their triumph on the military fields," he said.

Reza'i said the IRGC and basij forces are fully prepared to swing into action with firm determination on the cultural front for the defence of the ideals of the Islamic revolution.

He said the Iranian Muslim people under various circumstances have shown that they are firmly behind the leadership.

The camps called 'allegiance to the leadership' are part of preparations for the grand IRGC maneuvers codenamed 'Tariq al-Qods' to be held later this year.

Some 150,000 elite personnel are to be selected out of 500,000 forces to take part in the grand maneuvers this year.

Reza'i in his talk with reporters said the purpose of the maneuvers is to test the combat readiness of the IRGC and basij forces and that it poses no threat to any country. He said that at present the IRGC is involved in the implementation of reconstruction projects in the country worth rls. 250 billion.

He also disclosed that soon a special assault tank designed and built by the IRGC to withstand air strikes will be mass produced.

Iran: Commentary—EU Warns U.S. Not To Implement Sanctions

LD1306135096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1105 GMT 13 Jun 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] European Commission President Jacques Santer, accompanied by Prime Minister Romano Prodi of Italy, who is the current president of the EU Council, are in Washington to attend the six-monthly meeting between the EU and the United States. Yesterday, Santer warned about retaliation if the United States proceeds with its unilateral threat of sanctions against foreign firms that invest in Cuba, Iran, and Libya. [passage omitted]

In addition to the EU members, Russia, Japan, Canada, Mexico, and many other world countries are against the unilateral policies of the United States on international issues, such as the imposition of economic sanctions against such independent states as Iran, Cuba, and Libya. Those countries believe that America's implementation of such policies is tantamount to extending

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the internal laws of the United States outside its territories. They have therefore threatened retaliation if Washington perseveres with its plan to disregard international regulations.

Moreover, the EU would like to play a more active role at the international level similar to that in the Balkan crisis, the Middle East, etc. Political experts believe that the statesmen in the White House are not happy with the EU demands. These statesmen consider their country as the only surviving superpower of the cold war. They therefore believe that the United States should play the role of global gendarme. But the future of the world order will be determined by the growth of power among such big independent states as Iran, China, and India, together with the formation of new economic alliances similar to the EU. The United States must come to terms with this fact.

It appears that during their visit to the United States the EU officials are trying to make U.S. officials understand the facts of the new world order. Perhaps they will ask Washington to reorganize its policies on the basis of these facts.

Iran: Efforts Underway To Form Loya Jerga in Afghanistan

LD1306124796 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian 10 Jun 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Tired and Wounded Kabul"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Simultaneous with the sporadic fighting in Kabul, the recent political moves have created a climate of fear and hope. Kabul's wounded body is in need of an ointment to soothe its suffering. Yet, none of the warring factions are prepared to lay down their arms. Each group is waiting in ambush for the others to exhaust themselves and give up the fight.

Amidst the waiting game, efforts are undertaken to form a loya jerga [grand assembly] chaired by [former King] Zahir Shah. At the same time, there is a rumor that an international convention may be set up to resolve the problem. The Afghans are tired of clashes among the armed factions and particularly the quarrelsome Talebans. If the loya jerga is not set up, the people would be ready to receive an international mission to resolve the issue, the same as what happened in Bosnia. However, if such a mission were to be organized by Washington, it would create more problems for the future of Afghanistan.

Iran: Deputies List Priorities of Fifth Majles

NC1206144196 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 30 May 96 p 7

[Report on roundtable session with three newly elected Tehran Majles deputies, Dr. Hasan Ghafuri-Fard, secretary general of the Islamic Engineers' Association; Engineer Seyyed Mohsen Yahyavi, member of the Central Council of the Jameh-ye Eslami; and Engineer Da'ud Ja'fari, member of the Central Council of the Jameh-ye Eslami, in Tehran—date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The priorities of the fifth Majles were assessed at the monthly roundtable convened by the Islamic Engineers Association at the Hojjat Bin-al-Hasan al-'Askari mosque.

Initially, Dr. Ghafuri-Fard, the secretary general of the Islamic Engineers Association outlined the priorities of the fifth Majles, the most important of which would be seeking ways and means to combat the enemy's cultural onslaught. He added: The most important priority of the fifth Majles is to follow up issues that he great leader of the Islamic Revolution is very sensitive to, such as the enemy's cultural onslaught, and his eminence's sensitivity on this topic is more evident than on other issues. One of the means, Ghafuri-Fard continued, adopted by the enemy to carry out this cultural onslaught is to propagate the culture of liberalism [preceding word in English transliterated in Persian] and the theory of separation of church and state, regarding which the great leader of the Islamic Revolution warned us in the beginning of the new [Iranian] year. [passage omitted]

Dr. Ghafuri-Fard then said the second most important priority of the fifth Majles is attention to domestic and foreign policy. In the sphere of domestic policy, he felt that the people should be encouraged to participate actively in political affairs. One way of doing this is to implement the law of councils. In the area of foreign policy, he said that the Majles should formulate its strategy of forging relations with other countries on the basis of the three principles enumerated by his eminence, the great leader, namely, self-respect, wisdom, and expediency. Ghafuri-Fard stressed the active presence of the Islamic Republic of Iran in international organizations such as OPEC, and the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA].

Dr. Ghafuri-Fard said that among the other priorities of the fifth Majles were to devise ways of eliminating high prices, housing shortages, unemployment, as well as combating monopolies, and removing all bottlenecks in the path of production. [passage omitted]

The secretary general of the Islamic Engineers Association stated that attention to social problems, such as

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youth problems, are also among the other priorities of the fifth Majles. In answer to a question on the position of the organization in society, Engineer Seyyed Mohsen Yahyavi, member of the Central Council of the Association, said: The Islamic Engineers Association has a lofty position in our country and its expert views on society were extremely effective during the tenure of the fourth Majles and were used in decisionmaking. [passage omitted]

Engineer Da'ud Danesh Ja'fari, who is also a member of the Central Council of the Association, stated that one of the factors that caused inflation and high prices is the increase in the level of liquidity in society and added: The trend of economic growth in our country is not satisfactory and the country should have suitable plans so that its economic growth follows a constant and stable trend. He elaborated that, from 1365 [year beginning 21 March 1986] to 1370, the country witnessed a slump of 14.5 percent or a growth of 17.5 percent, which is not very satisfactory economic growth. Due to the issues stemming from the war in our country, our production prior to the implementation of the First [Five-Year] Plan, was the same as it was in 1353, even though the level of liquidity in society was 18 times higher.

Stressing the need for boosting non-oil exports, he said: A specific policy should be adopted in the field of industry and exports and we should have a clear picture of exports. He added: We should avoid all kinds of economic nondiscipline, as has been emphasized by his eminence, the great leader, and we should prevent the self-willed and limitless expenditure of foundations and companies, the directors of which are part of the executive apparatus of the country.

Iran: Editorial Discusses Tasks Facing Majles

NC1206073496 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 1 Jun 96 p 1

[Editorial: "The Obligations of the Fifth Majles"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The first session of the fifth Islamic Majles, which will be inaugurated this morning amid special ceremonies, is significant in that it marks the end of one era of lawmaking and the beginning of another. It also assumes greater importance because of when it is being convened.

The country has put behind it seven years of reconstruction and is in a relatively satisfactory position economically. Statistics indicate that economic growth in 1373 [year beginning 21 March 1994], despite the reduction of imports to one-third, was, on average, 3 percent. Projections for 1374 were over 2.5 percent. Even then, heavy investment in the years 1368-1372 boosted industry's share of the national economy enough to transform industry into a motor turning the wheels of Iran's economy.

Politically, particular diplomatic decisions and tactics coinciding with other fundamental changes in the world's politico-strategic structure have enhanced Iran's role and importance in the region.

But our country is facing gargantuan debate, which cannot remain hidden from the main legislative institution. The most important economic priority now is to accelerate economic growth such that it results in socio-economic development that puts it on a par with other Asian countries. Whatever the sloganeering, there should be ample wealth and production before we can discuss distribution.

To do that, there is no miracle or panacea that can please everybody. To accelerate economic growth, to make the country wealthy, and to popularize social justice, there is no way, but more work and greater productivity, reducing wastage, whether on the government or national level, directing resources toward specific sectors, and so on. This can only be done by taking away the resources from the clutches of "the group that has filled their pockets with illicit wealth" and distributing it to the "masses."

We are not in a position to allow everyone to do as he pleases and still be able to continue on the path of progress and development. The main mission of the fifth Majles is ultimately to make decisions and compile the strategy for development and for directing the massive resources of the country, that is, the path we should take in this regard.

On the political front, especially internationally, we should not overlook the importance of the multifaceted economic and political embargo imposed on our country by the United States despite Washington's failure in this regard. The limbo prevailing over the international relations of the greater powers will not be eliminated in one fell swoop. We cannot be content with some stray reports of support by one country or another for our diplomacy or their criticism of the White House's attitude.

There is evidence that, with an embargo against Iran, the United States feels more optimistic about its long-term effects. To neutralize this embargo, long-term planning is necessary. More important, our officials, especially of the Majles, must be completely vigilant.

Socially and culturally, our country is in the middle of momentous developments. Over 1 million youths — mostly educated and with high expectations — enter the social scene every year and over half of them find no

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suitable employment. Similarly, in the past few years, the induction of this fresh blood in the body of society has given the country a dynamism that means the wishes of society cannot, as in the past, be ignored in its decisionmaking and administration. This necessitates a closer, greater relationship with the social and political forces.

All told, the fifth Majles is opening when our country is in the throes of a forceful and historic transition. The fifth Majles' main task this term is to identify the needs, scope, and modus operandi geared toward this situation.

Iran: Ayatollah Jannati Sermon on Islamization of Universities

LD1406112596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Provincial Network in Persian
0755 GMT 14 Jun 96

[Second sermon of Tehran Friday [14 June] prayers delivered by Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, one of the acting Friday imams of Tehran and senior member of the Guardian Council, at Tehran University—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. [passage omitted] In his recent series of speeches and messages, the eminent leader, Ayatollah Khamene'i, referred to the important situation in our universities.

In an address to a group of esteemed university academics, he spoke in clear and unambiguous terms that were quite unprecedented. Obviously, he felt the need to speak in such terms. In several parts of his remarks, he emphasized his belief that the universities are un-Islamic. I do not remember any other time that he has stated this belief so clearly. What he said was a reality and we cannot doubt it. If we were to adopt a light-hearted approach to such a fundamental issue, we might one day find out that things have gone too far and the situation has become irreversible.

A university that seeks to train managers and other active personnel to carry out the country's construction and serve the people, and a university that intends to educate and nurture ministers for executive power, Majles deputies for the legislative organ, and finally judges for the judiciary, must ensure that its graduates have received a fully Islamic education. This is the least that one can expect from our universities.

I do not think that right now anyone can deny that most students enter our universities with very good and firm beliefs and ideas, but tend to lose a great deal of their faith in and commitment to Islamic morals and ethics when they graduate. I do not want to say that this is the case for all students. Naturally, there are some who invariably preserve and safeguard Islamic values. They leave the universities with their faith and piety intact, if not enhanced and strengthened. However, the general picture is not so bright.

So what must be done? What is the solution? The eminent leader issued clear instructions for the problem to be dealt with. Of course, there are some people who are dealing with this issue at this very moment. However, what is our duty, considering the degree of emphasis placed by the eminent leader on the problem?

Incidentally, I was recently asked this very same question. Even though the question requires a lengthy and detailed answer — which I intend to provide in another opportunity — I can give you a short and useful answer: As long as there are unsuitable individuals present in our institutions of higher education, either as managers or lecturers, then any talk about the Islamization of universities is totally absurd and meaningless. [Crowd chants: "God is Great!"]

The holy Koran is divine revelation. It is entirely the words of Almighty God. However, if we were to place this book in the hands of an impious person to implement its instructions, God knows what harm would come of it. We have seen what has happened throughout history. We can, therefore, conclude that as a first step, we must appoint pious people as managers and as university lecturers.

A group of university academic staff from one of the remote cities recently came to see me. These pious lecturers were complaining so bitterly that they were on the point of breaking down with sobbing tears. They had launched repeated complaints against the university chancellor, but no one had responded to their complaints. How can we expect to make this university Islamic when nobody takes any notice of the complaints? These were members of the academic staff, and not students. They were the hezbollahi lecturers. The religious basij students are treated even worse [Basij, or mobilization, members are admitted to universities with lower pass grades]. They are ignored. Something must be done. Those in charge of the universities must resolve this problem.

His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i also said that a religious hezbollahi student is justified in protesting against a professor if he feels the lecturer is distorting the Islamic issues. It is not fair to give a free hand to a lecturer to say whatever he wishes about God, Prophet Muhammad, the revolution, Islam, the clergy, the Guardianship of the Supreme Jurisconsult [Velayat-e Faqih], basij, Hezbollah, and the rest; and if a religious student protests, he is threatened with expulsion from the university, lower pass grades, etc. This has actually

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happened. His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i formally defended our religious students. If they see that a lecturer is questioning our values and is launching an onslaught against these values, they must have the right to defend these values. Nobody must reprimand them for this defense, and no one should deny them the right to defend our belief.

His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i also mentioned that universities must not be privatized. The universities should be funded by the state in order to enable everyone to study for higher degrees. [passage omitted]

His eminence also discussed the issue of sending some university graduates abroad to study higher degree courses, saying: There is no need to send students abroad. We do not gain much and there is the possibility that they may be corrupted by the foreign culture. We can train the students here in our own country. There are of course a few exemptions to this rule. Such exemptions will always be respected. [passage omitted]

Iran: Khamene'i on Important Role of 'Upper Strata'

LD1206131196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 12 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the course of the participation of His Eminence Ayatollah ['Ali] Khamene'i, the eminent leader of the Islamic revolution and the commander in chief, in the morning parade ceremony of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Division 27, which took place on Sunday, [9 June] the eminent leader took part in a friendly meeting with the commanders and a number of the combatants of this division. His eminence made very important remarks at this meeting, which lasted more than one and a half hours. In view of the importance of His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i's remarks in explaining the role of the upper strata of society — as the agents of thought and analysis — we decided to present a report about it, after obtaining permission from the eminent leader's office. We, therefore, draw your attention to this summary of His Eminence's remarks.

At this meeting, Khamene'i spoke of the importance of learning a lesson from the incidents that led to the painful tragedy in Karbala' [where Imam Husayn was martyred], and reminded his audience of the important role played by the upper strata [khavas] of society, as the agents of thought, knowledge, and analysis, in determining the direction taken by history. [passage omitted]

The eminent leader of the Islamic revolution called on the agents of thought and analysis to give the greatest possible consideration to the important events that took place in the early days of Islam. He added that: a trustworthy guardian must show the way; sharp eyes must see into the depths of society; thoughtful people must guide actions; and strong wills must support these actions so that a strong and impenetrable barrier and fortress is formed in the face of the enemy. Otherwise, fear might arise that our Islamic society could reach a point similar to the one reached by Imam Husayn, peace be upon him. We expect this understanding to be instilled in the culture of our country today, by people of thought and knowledge, and the necessary lesson drawn from the event of 'Ashura [Imam Husayn's martyrdom].

The eminent leader described Islamic Iran as the focal point of jihad, selflessness and values, and he went on to say: Iran is the country of jihad in the path of God and, at the helm of the country, there are faithful, hardworking, knowledgeable and sincere people. A hardworking and resistant personality, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, is the president of the country; someone who has devoted his whole life to jihad and who today, too, engages in jihad in the path of God 24 hours a day. We thank God that the country's officials, senior theologians and the armed forces, including the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, as well as speakers, preachers, and academics, are all moving in the path of serving the revolution, Islam and values.

The eminent leader then spoke of the meaning of the lower strata and the upper strata [avam va khavas] of society. He said: Those people who take decisions on the basis of thought, knowledge, and analysis, and act upon their decisions, form the upper strata. People who act without any clear analysis or judgment, under the influence of the prevailing climate, are known as the lower strata. Thus, being a member of the upper strata or lower strata does not have anything to do with wealth or poverty, literacy or illiteracy, being a woman or a man, because there are many illiterate or poor people who must be considered as part of the upper strata. Conversely, there may well be many educated or wealthy people who must be seen as part of the lower strata. [passage omitted]

His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i spoke of the role played by the upper strata [of that time] in the tragic martyrdom of Imam Husayn,and said: When Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, rose up against the government of Yazid, many members of the upper strata did not rush to his assistance. They chose comfort for themselves over the destiny of the Islamic world in the centuries to come, and the lower strata followed their lead. Thus, the longer I think about the event of 'Ashura, the more I realize that the upper strata are the most to

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blame and some of them behaved in the worst possible way.

The eminent leader of the Islamic revolution stressed the importance of a well-timed and well-judged movement in saving history, and said: Judgment, decisions, and action by the upper strata when required, and their willingness to overlook the tempting beauties of this world saves history and safeguards values. The upper strata must, therefore, take the necessary steps at the appropriate moment, because, otherwise, any subsequent actions will not bear any fruit.

Iran: March-April Inflation Exceeds 35 Percent in Urban Areas

LD1206173296 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 9 Jun 96 p1

[Unattributed news report entitled: "Urban Inflation Exceeds 35 Percent in Farvardin"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Service — In the month of Farvardin this year [20 March to 19 April 1996], the rate of inflation reached 35.5 percent in urban areas. A report by the Statistical Office of the Iranian Central Bank says that the price index for goods and services in the month of Farvardin was 443.7, which shows a monthly increase of 5.7 percent. Compared with the corresponding period in the year 1374, the index shows a growth of 35.5 percent. The annual inflation rate in the year 1373 was 51.1 percent.

Iran: Political Figure on Future of Moderates in Political Life

LD1306221596 Tehran IRAN in Persian 10 Jun 96 p 16

[Article from the "What Else Is New?" column]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] We have heard that Dr. Habibollah Peyman [leader of Movement of Combatant Muslims] has been interviewed by the state London radio [BBC]. He was asked: "Is it possible that moderates will be gradually eliminated in Iran?" He said: "That is possible, but the rightist faction should also consider that its monopoly means that the policies adopted by the government would grind to a halt. During the past few years, the government has established relations with foreign companies and governments and has drawn up certain economic programs. So it seems that the rightist faction should compromise with its rival faction. At the same time it should hold on to its superior position." [passage omitted]

Iran: SOBH To Become Monthly Publication 'Next Month'

LD1306171996 Tehran SOBH in Persian 11 Jun 96 pp 1,3

[Unattributed article: "SOBH Becomes a Monthly From Next Month"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] From the proprietor of SOBH [Mehdi Nasiri]: In the present circumstances the publication of SOBH requires double the effort, energy, and resources, which I feel is beyond me. Therefore, in order not to stop the work completely, I felt it necessary to make SOBH a monthly publication.

The weekly SOBH will be published for one more week and from then on it will become a monthly publication. [passage omitted]

We hope to be able to bring out the first monthly edition of SOBH toward the end of the next month [month beginning 21 June]. The exact publication date will be announced in a number of newspapers. Mehdi Nasiri added: The size, form, and content of the monthly will be similar to its weekly edition. It will have at least 80 pages and it will remain a political, cultural, and social publication that will deal with topical issues. The monthly SOBH should keep all its present readers, but as it becomes a monthly publication its news content will naturally be reduced. [passage omitted]

Iran: Correspondent Appeals to Minister on Governor's 'Pressure'

LD1306143996 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 9 Jun 96 p 4

[Article by JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI Khorramabad correspondent: "A Word With the Honorable Interior Minister"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an Islamic society, the press plays an effective part in guiding and increasing public awareness. For that purpose, as a means of communication between the people and the authorities, for conveying criticisms and views, and solving social problems, reporters have a sensitive duty. To act accordingly would solve many problems.

Unfortunately, because of the ignorance of the province's management of the press' mission, that role has been completely forgotten in Lorestan Province for some time. Consequently, reporters are not able to perform their grave duty of reporting the news.

Therefore, the honorable interior minister is asked if a governor general who cannot tolerate criticism and does not believe in or respect the press' mission can

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manage a province. From what we have seen of the governor general of Lorestan, as a representative of the government, he has repeatedly committed uncultured acts against reporters and has violated their integrity and has even exerted pressure on them.

In any case, since the silence of the honorable interior minister concerning the Lorestan governor general's violations of the integrity of reporters has made him more blatant and has caused him to misuse his power more, the continuation of which actions would cause irreparable damage to society, once again we ask the honorable interior minister to look into the illegal actions of the above-mentioned governor general and also to make him aware of his legal duties.

It should be pointed out that in the last two weeks, the confrontations between the governor general of Lorestan and JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI and KAYHAN correspondents have increased. Their being barred from the administrative council session and the government pavilion at Khorramabad Airport to cover the visit of the honorable Islamic guidance minister actively prevented them from reporting the events, reports of which, together with a request to the interior minister, were published in KAYHAN and JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI on 26 May, 6 June, and 8 June.

Iran: Law Enforcement Force Prevents Hezbollah Gathering

LD1206232696 Tehran SOBH in Persian 11 Jun 96 p 4

[Unattributed article: "The Law Enforcement Forces Prevent Hezbollah Gathering in Shemiran"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Law Enforcement Forces prevented a gathering by the members of the Shemiran Hezbollah last week. They wanted to protest against the remarks made by the head of the Women's Sports Solidarity Council, Fa'ezeh Hashemi [President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's daughter].

According to a statement issued by Shemiran Hezbollah, the Law Enforcement Forces blocked the road at the beginning of Za'faraniyye Avenue and prevented Shemiran Hezbollah forces from reaching the offices of the Women's Sports Solidarity Council.

The statement adds: Towards the end of the protest the Law Enforcement Forces tried to arrest a number of the Hezbollah members, but other people stopped them from doing so. [passage omitted]

A part of the statement reads: We announce our support for all the hezbollahis who serve the system. On the threshold of the setting up of the fifth Majles we call on the hezbollahi deputies to follow, with all their might, the message of the eminent leader which stresses the need to fight liberalism and protect the values of the system during the reconstruction of the country. In this respect, they also should seriously investigate the violations of the law by the [Tehran] municipality, the Mostaz'afan Foundation, and others. They should show the seriousness of the Islamic law to those who violate it.

We warn all the opportunists and promoters of banality that if they continue their despicable acts, such as promoting bicycling and motorcycling for women and so on, they shall face Hezbollah's action.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Spokesman Links M-11 Missile Allegations to Brown Amendment

BK1406062296 Islamabad THE NATION in English 14 Jun 96 p 16

[Report by THE NATION staff reporter]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — The Foreign Office has categorically denied a report in an American publication regarding the alleged operationalisation of M-11 missiles by Pakistan.

A spokesman of the Foreign Office while terming the report baseless, said the report itself had stated that the Pakistani embassy in Washington had denied the allegations.

He termed the story a part of the regrettable effort by certain quarters in Washington to continue to air unsubstantiated and false allegations about Pakistan and thus to impede the improvement in relations set in motion by the adoption of the Brown Amendment.

The spokesman noted that it interesting that the story had no mention of Pakistan's proposal for the creation of a Zero Missile Zone in South Asia or of the danger to regional stability posed by India's realisation of its plans to manufacture and deploy the nuclear-capable Prithvi missile and its continued development of the intermediate range Agni missile.

The spokesman expressed the confidence that decision-makers in Washington would make a distinction between the truth and such motivated stories. He said these efforts to malign a friendly country and mislead public opinion would not succeed.

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Pakistan: Finance Minister—Defense Spending Up 14 Percent in 1996-97 Budget

BK1306144996 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The federal budget for the next financial year envisages a total outlay of 500.2 billion rupees, which is 15.1 percent higher than the current year outlay. The resource availability has been estimated at 439.3 billion rupees. Twenty billion rupees will be borrowed from banks, and 40.9 billion rupees gap will be met through various taxations and other budgetary measures. Receipts from external resources are estimated at about 103 billion rupees.

Defense expenditure has been set at 131.4 billion rupees, an increase of 14 percent. Debt servicing has been estimated at 186 billion rupees. Expenditure on civil administration is estimated at 47.3 billion rupees, indicating an increase of 7.7 percent. The provinces will receive 133.2 billion rupees from the divisible pool of federal taxes. This amount is higher by 16.5 billion rupees from the budget estimates of the outgoing financial year. Punjab will get over 71.13 billion, Sindh 34.5 billion, NWFP [North-West Frontier Province] 16.22 billion, and Balochistan 11.31 billion rupees.

About 105 billion rupees have been set aside for public sector development programs. WAPDA [Water and Power Development Authority] will get over 10.36 billion rupees and another 2.5 billion will be spent on village electrification. National Highway Authority is to receive over 12.83 billion rupees, People's Program 4.5 billion rupees, and Tamir-i-Sindh [construction of Sindh Province] 2.5 billion rupees.

Two hundred million rupees have been allocated for the Afghan refugees, 250 million for Malakand package, 110 million for Peshawar, and 40 million for northern areas package. The minister of state for finance said specially high increases have been earmarked in the budget for education, family planning, and environment. He said the most significant component of the development strategy would be the Social Action Program for which 62 billion rupees have been earmarked through federal and provincial contributions.

Presenting the new budget in the National Assembly this afternoon, the minister of state for finance pointed out that in 1993 when the present government assumed power, it inherited a bedeviled economy. High and luxurious government spendings, political corruption, increased foreign debt, billions of rupees swallowed through loans never paid back, and worsening law and order situation had placed the country on the edge of bankruptcy and ruins. Since then the present government has brought the nation a long way to the better. Through various policy measures, it tried to control inflation, curb corruption, and recover huge sums usurped by the unscrupulous. Concrete measures were taken to eliminate poverty through a gigantic Social Action Program. Pakistan's credibility abroad was restored. In three years, the country attracted $3 billion in foreign private investment as against $2 billion of investment in the past 20 years.

The minister of state said we have calculated the budgetary gap of 41 billion rupees with the aim of reaching of 4 percent deficit by the end of fiscal year 1996-97. The budget deficit was 8 percent when this government took over. He pointed out that of 41 billion rupees, we are raising 25 billion to reduce the budget deficit by 1 percent, caused by the Nawaz [Sharif] regime. That leaves only 16 billion rupees as our own budgetary gap, which is en extremely low figure in terms of GDP.

In the new budget, he said, high increases in allocation of funds have been made for family planning, education, and environment. The most significant aspect of the government's strategy will be the Social Action Program, for which 62 billion rupees have been earmarked.

The minister of state said 1997 will also be the year of Pakistan golden jubilee [anniversary of independence]. The high mark of the occasion will be an Islamic summit. The government and the people will join hands to celebrate the moment of glory.

The Minister of State for Finance Makhdum Shahabuddin announced a number of adjustments in customs duty, direct tax, capital value tax, central excise, and sales tax. He said import duty on machinery to be used for export products has been brought down to 10 percent. These include special textile machinery, embroidery, (?flocking) and coating machines, and printing blankets. Custom duty on basic raw material used in plastic industry is also being brought down. Duty on pulp used in the preparation of paper has been reduced from 35 percent to 10 percent. Import duty on ships has also been brought down from 45 percent to 10 percent. Import duty on tires has also been reduced from 15 percent

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to 10 percent, while import duty on raw material used for local manufacture of tires has also been reduced to 10 percent. Restriction of Form A has been withdrawn from Pakistanis coming from abroad and shopping card system is being reintroduced. The government has decided to set up a Fiscal Anomalies Committee, which would also include representative of trade and industry. All anomalies will be removed bv 31 August. He said these measures would result in revenue generation of 7.6 billion rupees.

Turning to direct taxes, he said it has been decided that different exemptions given to industries should be converted into tax credit system. This would help eradicate different drawbacks in the tax system. He said exemptions are being withdrawn from 1 July from some industries manufacturing soft-stuff toys, fruit processing units, fish processing, pioneer industries, electronics, and agro-based industries. Tax is also being imposed on casual income, foreigners income, and on corporate employees recreational allowances, tickets, expenditure on vehicles of personal use and house rent. Ceiling of income tax deduction on trucks and buses has been increased from 12,000 to 18,000. Ten percent advance tax has been imposed on mobile telephone bills.

Pakistan: Bhutto Urges People To Help Implement 'Balanced Budget'

BK1306155396 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 13 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said that her government has presented a balanced budget in the larger interest of the people. Talking to newsmen in her chamber in the Parliament after the presentation of the federal budget, she called upon the people to cooperate with the government in the successful implementation of the new budget. The prime minister said the present government has succeeded in reducing the budget deficit from 8 to 5 percent, and it is hoped that this deficit will be brought down to 4 percent in the next fiscal year. Benazir Bhutto said that in the new budget her government has endeavored to bring nontaxpayers into the tax net.

The Pakistan Democratic Front, which held its meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in Islamabad today, unanimously approved the budget proposals for 1996-97.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: 5 Tamil Tigers Arrested in Plot To Blast Power Plant

BK1406032196 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 14 Jun 96

[Report by Premakumar Rajapakse — Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A SPECIAL police team probing an alleged LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] plot to blast the Kelanitissa thermal power plant in Colombo arrested five Tiger suspects allegedly involved in the plot from a lodging house in Kathiresan Road, Pettah at midnight Thursday. [13 June]

Their arrest followed the interrogation of another suspect arrested in this connection in Kalmunai earlier, eastern province.

This suspect who had divulged LTTE plans to destroy the Kelanitissa power plant had also during interrogations leaked the whereabouts of the other five suspects involved in it.

Police said according to the information given by this suspect the LTTE had planned to attack the Kelanitissa power plant adopting the same tactics they used in the Kolonnawa attack.

Their plan was to tie bombs to the turbines at the power plant and then storm the power station in 'kamikaze' style and detonate the bombs completely destroying the plant.

Another suspect involved in the plot is said to be hiding in Matale, central province and another police team was despatched to Matale to hunt him down.

The names of the suspects were not divulged for security reasons.

Police are now trying to locate the armoury, the suspects are said to have hidden in Colombo to be used in the planned attack.

Investigations are continuing.

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